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SABINA QURESHI

Pakistan:
Education and Gender Policy
Girl's Education: A Lifeline
to Development

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PAKISTAN: EDUCATION AND GENDER POLICY
GIRL'S EDUCATION: A LIFELINE TO DEVELOPMENT

Research Paper

by

Sabina Qureshi

IPF Fellow 2003

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In view of the potential of this research to expand, I will say it is a work in progress.

Comments and suggestions would be welcome at qureshi@policy.hu

PAKISTAN AT A GLANCE

Geography

With a total land area of 796,095 square kilometers, Pakistan stands at the crossroads of geo-strategic regions South Asia and Central Asia. Iran neighbors Pakistan to the south-west; Afghanistan to the west and north; China to the north-east and India stretches down to its eastern side. The southern coast abuts the Arabian Sea.

The country is composed of towering peaks in the north, including the second-highest mountain in the world, K-2 (8611m/28,245ft), dry and scrubby mountains in the west, plateau in the south-west, barren deserts in the south-east and alluvial plains everywhere else.

Administrative Set-up

Pakistan is a federation of four provinces of Punjab, Sindh, North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Balochistan. Islamabad Capital Territory, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Federally Administered Northern Areas (FANA), also form part of the federation. Islamabad is the capital city

Human Resources

Population:149 million (2003)

Population density:166 per sq.km.

Male:77.38

Female :71.65

Urban:49.91

Rural:99.12

Population Growth Rate:2.1 % (2002-2003)

Sex Ratio:108 men for 100 women

Average Household size :6.8 persons(1998)

Labour Force:42.75

Unemployment:7.8

Crude Birth Rate per 1000:27.30

Crude Death Rate per 1000:8.0

Infant Mortality Rate per 1000:83.3

Life Expectancy:63 years (2000)

Government Structure

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan was founded as an independent sovereign federal state in 1947, as a consequence of the freedom struggle led by Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of the state.

Pakistan is a republican state with a parliamentary system of government. It has a bicameral federal legislature with Senate as the upper house and National Assembly as the lower house. Each province has its own provincial legislature known as the Provincial Assembly.

More information on <http://www.pak.gov.pk>

Economic Profile

Per Capita Income:\$ 492

GDP(at cost factor):5.1%*

GDP (at market prices):5.8%*

GNP:8.4%

Inflation:3.3%

Annual growth:5%

Financial Year: July 1 to June 30

Currency: 1Pak Rupee= 100 paisa. UN Exchange rate 2004:Pak Rupee 57.35= US\$ 1

Major industries: Textiles, Leather, Sports Goods, Medical Instruments, Paper products, Construction materials

Major trading partners: China, EU, Hong Kong, Japan, M.E, USA.

Social Development

Education

Expenditure as percentage of GNP:1.7%

Literacy Rate:47 percent (1999-2000) 51.6% (June 2003)

Male:59.0 (of total 47 percent as indicated in 1999-2000)

Female:35.4 (of total 47 percent as indicated in 1999-2000)

Health

Expenditure on health as percentage of GNP:0.7%

Religion

Islam is the state religion. Over 90 percent are Sunni Muslims. Minorities include Christians, Sikhs, Hindus, Buddhists

Languages

Urdu is the national language. Various regional languages are also spoken. English is the official language,

Important Departments

- Ombudsman Office
- National Security Council
- National Steering Committee
- National Commission on Status of Women <http://www.ncsw.gov.pk/>
- National Commission for Human Development (<http://www.nchd.org.pk/>)

Major Governance Reforms (ongoing)

- Devolution of power
- Police Reforms
- Judicial Reforms
- Educational Reforms
- Tax Reforms
- Civil Service Reforms and Political Reforms
- Public- Private Partnerships in gender conscious social sector reform and its integration on economic development agenda

ROADMAP OF THE RESEARCH PAPER

The research paper is divided into the following four chapters:

Chapter I: Part I of the first Chapter defines profile of women in Pakistan and presents the issue of education deprivation of women. Part II describes the purpose of research. Part III outlines the methodology and limitations of the study.

Chapter II: Part I defines trends in literacy in Pakistan, the male/female; rural/urban enrolment and drop-out rates, status of primary schools and teacher's education in Pakistan, using statistical information. Part II highlights factors that affect literacy in Pakistan. Part III discusses the major constraints to girl's education in Pakistan.

Chapter III reviews past policies and programs implemented during the last decade, highlighting progressive measures, including incentive schemes, education policy making, the role of media, development of gender supportive material and the contribution of the NGOs and the private sector, which had an impact on girl's education.

Chapter IV: Part I focuses on the results of the Education For All 2000 Assessment and reflects current policies and programs, adopted to improve access of girls to primary education, identifying the gaps that need to be bridged. Part II visualizes a possible future scenario for girl's education in Pakistan, in the general context of gender equity, gives policy recommendations.

Appendices to the Research Paper are Notes and References, References to the Boxes and Tables and Bibliography.

CHAPTER I: FEMALE EDUCATION DEPRIVATION PROBLEM



“While growing up in South Asia is a perpetual struggle, to be a woman in this region is to be a non-person. Women bear the greatest burden of human deprivation in South Asia”

Dr. Mahbub-ul-Haq

THE FEMALE EDUCATION DEPRIVATION PROBLEM: DEFINITION AND CONTEXT

Education is a human right and is central to development, social progress and human freedom. Denial of access to basic education to girls and women is not only a matter of gender discrimination, it is bad economics and bad social policy.

Pakistan lies in the zone of the world which embraces 75% of the world's illiterate population, majority of whom are women. In the education sector, the country is faced with a dilemma since its independence. After 57 years of independence since 1947, estimated literacy rate is 51.13%. Roughly on an average, literacy rate in Pakistan has been growing at the rate of 1% or even less per annum(1). On the other hand, the total number of illiterates in Pakistan has almost doubled in absolute numbers from 28 million in 1972 to 48 million at present. It is alarming to note that share of female illiterate adults has been increasing over the years, from 52% of 28 million to over 60% of 48 million today (2). Of the 149 million Pakistanis, unfortunately, of the illiterate population in Pakistan, 41% are males and 65% are females. Independent sources indicate that current literacy rate projected by Government of Pakistan is too high as this percentage includes people who can merely sign their names. They view literacy rate in Pakistan by real definition is no higher than 26%.

Enrolment at primary and secondary level has increased insignificantly. Of the 149 million people, 18 million are children between the ages 5 to 9 years. Of these 18 million, only 11.8 million attend school and over 6 million have never been to school. Of these 11.8 million children, half drop-out before completion of five years of schooling, more than half of the drop-outs are girls(3).

At the population growth rate of 2.1% a year, almost 3.4 million children are added to the population each year, of whom only half have access to basic education and the other half is out of school each year, putting additional pressure on the Government of Pakistan's education system. Of these "Never been to school children" over 66% are girls.

Female literacy rate in Pakistan, particularly among rural women, is the lowest in the world and educational attainment of girls is far below than that of boys. It is unfortunate that education of women is not considered a mean for social change or a process by which they can learn to question, think and become agents of change.

Pakistan ranks 144th out of 175 countries in the human development rating. Statistics indicate there has been under investment in human capital (4). The situation is particularly alarming for women and those living in rural areas. The Government expenditure on Education remains only 1.7% of GDP (5).

East Asia built up its human capital through major public and private investments in education. For instance, in 1960, Pakistan was spending only about 1 per cent of its GNP of public expenditure on education while the Republic of Korea was spending twice as much and Malaysia and Singapore three times as much. The cumulative benefits of such major investments in human capital have become increasingly evident with the passage of time. East Asian GDP per capita had climbed above \$ 11,000 (in PPP dollars) by 1993, compared to a level of \$ 1,370 in South Asia. The gap in their per capita incomes had widened from only \$ 200 in 1960 to over \$ 9,700 by 1993(6).

Starting in 1955, each five year plan and all 57 years of planned development, participation of women in national development has been a major policy concern for all governments. Despite policy commitments, the educational status of women in Pakistan continues to be low.

Government of Pakistan has officially endorsed global mandate on gender equity for advancing the concept of “gender mainstreaming” which promotes integration of gender sensitive policy prescriptions into national development policies and programs at all levels and throughout all sectors as envisaged in the United Nations Convention on Rights of Children, Convention on Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women and 4th Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995 and the UN Millennium Declaration 2000.

The Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan provides for equality of rights for all, regardless of gender and includes special provisions to protect the rights of children. It also entails to remove illiteracy and provide free and compulsory secondary education within minimum possible period (7). Pakistan has developed its National Plan of Action (NPA) of Education for All, which has prioritized primary education, adult literacy and early childhood education as the leading concerns in education.

Despite Government of Pakistan’s international and national commitments and participatory role of multilateral and bilateral development partners towards promotion of gender equity and equality in education, statistics indicate that targets have remained unachieved except some pockets of progress. In the last decade of the 20th century, overall performance in education sector remained disappointing. The Net Enrollment Rate declined from 46 % to 44 %, Gross Enrollment Rate from 73% to 71% rate, rural-urban disparity in GER widened and number of illiterates has increased from 36 million in 1961 to 47 million in 1998.

The gender gap is still quite high as percentage of literate males (59.0%) is higher than literate females (35.5%)(8). Share of education as percentage of GDP has fallen from 2.4% in 1998-99 to 1.7% in 2002-2003 (9).

The research explores, identifies and explains specific issues related to gender and education in Pakistan in order to advocate for an affirmative plan of action for girl's education both at policy and schools level. The research addresses the following key questions:

What is the nature of the crises of low level of literacy in Pakistan? What are the implications of inequities in education on society with particular reference to girl child education? How do existing impediments to development i.e. low level of literacy in Pakistan particularly that of girls and women can add to social costs for a country like Pakistan? What are the major areas of concern in primary level education which need intervention? and to advocate an affirmative plan of action for girls child education both at policy and school level.

PROFILE OF A GIRL CHILD

SITUATION REVIEW

A brief description of the milieu in which the girls and women live in Pakistan, is essential to understand the context of the problem.

The Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan provides for equality of rights for all, regardless of gender and includes special provisions to protect the rights of children (1). Government of Pakistan has also officially endorsed the global mandate on gender equity as envisaged in the Looking Forward Strategies for the Advancement of Women (Nairobi, 1985), Convention on Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women and 4th Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995 and the UN Millennium Declaration 2000 (2).

Moreover, the state religion Islam also accords a special place to women in society. Islam provides for equality, justice and harmony between the sexes and emphasizes that one is complementary to the other. Many of the socio-cultural practices are totally alien to the spirit of Islam.

Contrary to theory, extant socio-cultural practices are a major detriment of the disparate situation of girls, reflected statistically in the development status of girls and adult women. Although the intensity and impact of the deprived status varies with education, urbanization and sometimes with income and class differences.

Women's lives in Pakistan do not form a homogeneous entity. The uneven pattern of development and education have meant that a Pakistani woman's life can have remained petrified for centuries or have been radically altered by the dramatic events of history. Depending on her geographical location, a Pakistani women can find herself in a tribal, feudal or urban environment. She can be a highly qualified and self-confident professional or a modest domesticated housewife, she can lead an extremely isolated life cut off from all decisions and information in either urban middle class or tribal belts or she can be a central figure of authority in the limited circle of influential women in government and business circles(3). Pakistan twice had a female Prime Minister, many women hold the office of Cabinet Ministers or Special Advisor to the Prime Minister, representation of women is also evident in central and provincial legislatures, women have also entered the civil service and has taken up other professional career lines.

Despite achievements, primitive thinking still prevails and is more pronounced in rural parts of the country, where two thirds of the population of the 149 million Pakistanis reside. Birth of a son is celebrated as a festivity and that of a daughter a source of disappointment. It is a common thinking that men are stronger and intellectually superior, a view that many women themselves hold. The physical security of the adolescent girl is the greatest concern to her family. She is assigned domestic and dependent roles which leads to increasingly restricted mobility and segregation. Girlhood is culturally mute. She has limited or no choice to education, employment, choice of a husband and participation in general in public life. This limits girl's decision-making power, keeps the level of awareness of her rights low, develops a poor self-concept and limits her aspirations.

The 1981 Census showed a ratio of 111 males to 100 females, one of the worst in the world. The comparatively low number of women as a percentage of the total population is an indication of precarious living condition. The greater levels of deprivation of women and girls is reflected in their lower nutritional status, higher mortality and lower levels of education. Early marriages are still frequent, particularly in rural and tribal areas. According to the 1972 Census, 70.4% of the girls and women, aged 10 years and above, were married(4).

Decision making role of women has been nominal due to their lack of access and control over resources including finances, lower educational and skill levels, limited mobility due to cultural restrictions and heavy requirements of domestic roles

The educational status of women in Pakistan is also unacceptably low. The research survey reveals wide disparities between boys and girls. Some 67 % of women compared with 41% of men are deprived of education(5). Unfortunately education is seen by the parents as a means to earn an income while other benefits to personal and human development are overlooked.

- Pakistan's Literacy and enrolment rates are among the lowest in the world
- 76% of the female adult population is illiterate
- 8.2 million children are out of school; 5.9 million of them are girls
- 75 percent of rural girls drop out at the primary school level
- only 3 percent of rural twelve year old girls continue in school, compared with 18 percent of boys that age
- 57 percent of primary age girls attend school, compared with 89 percent of boys girl's participation rates at all levels are lower than those of boys

Box I

Nevertheless women in Pakistan do play a vital role as farmers, workers in the agriculture and livestock sectors, workers in the informal sector as employees in the manufacturing industries and in the service sector. Their problem is not of exclusion but of invisibility. Their representation at economic forums or formal labour markets is almost negligible.

The international observers are yet skeptical of present role of women in Pakistani society. The United Nations Human Development Report alongwith indicators of gender inequality have highlighted the need to focus upon provision of opportunities for Pakistani women in all spheres of life and creation of a just and secure environment to protect their human rights(6).

The charter of women's rights presented to the first Constituent Assembly in Pakistan sought equality of status, equality of opportunity, equal pay for equal work and demanded fundamental rights for women (7).

I wish to impress on you that no nation can rise to the heights of glory unless your women are side by side with you.

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah

Founder of Pakistan

Address at the Muslim University, Aligarh, March 10, 1944

Since mid-1980's there has been increasing attention at national, regional and international levels to redress gender-based disparities particularly in the health and education sector. The Sixth Five Year Plan aimed at quantum jump in the spread of primary education and improving status of women. The plan was guided by the desire to create a literate society. It came with the conviction that education and health make a greater contribution to improve labour productivity than do most alternative investments. It advocated for the government to play a promotional role than a regulatory role. The national development plan offered concrete programs for a more rapid development of women(8).

Urban women comprise a growing proportion of the occupational category of professionals. They have made inroads in non-traditional areas such as engineering, banking and law though their number remains limited. Their number have increased largely in medicine and teaching professions. Women comprise less than five percent of the public sector and their main concentration is social sector departments as health and education.

Labour legislation in Pakistan provides comprehensive benefits to female workers whereby they are entitled to maternity leave with full wages and child care facilities(9). About three fourths of urban women are employed in the informal sector

In the context of ownership of assets, women have a legal and religious right to own, administer, buy or sell property on their own under Islamic laws in Pakistan. Men and women inherit fixed shares of property from the property of their deceased relations as father, mother or husband etc. However, in practice decisions related to sale or purchase of property are made by male members of the family on their behalf.

Women have a right to vote and stand for elective bodies and hold all public offices at par with men. Affirmative actions are taken from time to time to reserve seats for women in the national and provincial legislatures. Reservation of 33% seats for women in local bodies and reservation of 5% seats for women in state employment are some positive measures in this regard (10).

The 1990 decade was marked as the SAARC Decade of the Girl Child 1991-2000(11). Concurrently, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, World Summit for Children and National Plan of Action for Women gave an impetus to these initiatives and contributed towards girl child support action.

The last decade has seen new advocacy groups and seen a qualitative and quantitative increase in activism focusing on enhancing women's share in power and decision making at all levels. Women's groups have become active and lobby a variety of social sectors amongst government departments, political parties and other institutions of civil society.

Ministry of Women Development, Social Welfare and Special Education is Government of Pakistan's national machinery to promote and advance rights of women, to formulate public policies and to recommend legislation to meet needs of women to ensure equal opportunities for women in all walks of life. National Commission on Status of Women, Women's Legal Rights Committee and Women's Legal Aid Committee are other significant forums to safeguard woman's rights. Opening up of Women Police Stations and First Women Banks are some of the affirmative actions taken by the Government of Pakistan towards this end.

Women issues related NGOs are also very active in awareness campaigns, free legal aid to women victims of discriminatory customs, lobbying with political parties for inclusion of issues related to women in their political manifestos, monitoring incidence of domestic violence against women, gender discrimination and women trafficking.

The opening up of strong advocacy during the late 1980's led to greater visibility of the girl child. Pakistani women have faced as uphill task for the recognition of their basic human rights but the process is moving ahead.

PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

The purpose of the research is to explore, identify and explain specific issues related to gender and education in Pakistan in order to advocate an affirmative plan of action for girl's education both at policy and school level. More specifically, the research aims to:

1. Study chronic problems of limited access to basic primary education in Pakistan
2. Analyze trends of primary education in Pakistan highlighting existing gender imbalances in enrolment, participation and drop-out levels based on statistical information
3. Identify factors affecting access to primary education with focus on girl's education
4. Identify the gaps that need to be bridged to improve girl child education
5. Analyze gender dimensions of policies and strategies over the last decade implemented to achieve gender balance in the context of Education for All 2000 goals
6. Draw lessons from good practices i.e. projects and experiences perceived as "best practices" in the context of quality and equal education
7. Compare the gender indicators for education with other developing and developed countries and draw up lessons for its dissemination
8. Develop a possible scenario for girl's education in Pakistan, in the general context of gender equity

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

The research is based on secondary sources. National statistical sources have been extensively used which include various issues of the Economic Survey, Federal Bureau of Statistics Reports, Population and Housing Census Report, National Household Integrated Household Surveys and the reports published by the National Education Management and Information System (NEMIS). The research also relies on other data sources as published by UNESCO and the UNICEF.

For review of policies and strategies to achieve gender equality and equity in education, reference has been made to the planning documents of the Planning Commission and the Ministries of Education (National Plan of Action for Education for All) and of Women Development, Social Welfare and Special Education (National Plan of Action for Women). Research studies as World Development Reports (The World Bank), Pakistan Human Development Reports (United Nations Development Program) and the Human Development Reports of South Asia (Mahbub-ul-Haq Centre for Human Development, Pakistan) have been an effective source of information.

In addition to the above, information was also obtained in the following manner:

- Personal interviews and discussions with clients(parents & students), service providers(teachers) and the policy makers(relevant departments/ Ministries)
- Visits to schools, communities and institutions as Ministry of Education, Ministry of Women Development, Social Welfare and Special Education & Planning and Development Division.
- Discussions with people concerned in UNESCO, UNICEF, NGO's and individual philanthropists
- Observation of the work being performed in these various institutions
- Perusal of literature and analysis of information made available
- Information gathering on relevant issues through questionnaires

The policy recommendations on promoting girl's education, have been developed keeping in view the socio-cultural considerations, international commitments and above all goals and targets incorporated in the intended future policies and programs (such as the Perspective Development Plan and the Education Sector Reforms) outlined for girl's education, in particular, and gender equity, in general.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research suffers from the following limitations:

1. It is difficult to find composite and comprehensive literacy data for Pakistan in a consolidated form or in the form of a data base. The census report are the major source of literacy statistics in the country.
2. As it is based primarily on secondary published data, it relies on a variety of sources, often not published or compiled regularly. As such, it is difficult to generate consistent time series comparisons and interpret trends accurately.
3. The research's focus is limited only to primary education of children particularly of girls.
4. In some cases, it was not possible to make a meaningful comparison using indicators from various sources as there is a wide divergence in the statistics provided by the Government sector and recorded by non-government sector. For example, the Government of Pakistan documents the adult literacy rate as 51% in the year 2003 whereas other sources place the literacy rate not over 45% for the same year.
5. Targets set for achieving universal primary education and gender balance is varied and ambitious therefore developing future scenario in this context has been difficult.
6. Information on some very important indicators is not available e.g., income levels of out-of-school children, especially girls, ratio of teacher absenteeism.
7. An attempt was made to include field surveys and studies based on questionnaires to fill the gaps in certain critical areas as who are the girls who do not attend school? Why don't they attend schools? Is the son preference major constraint to girl's education? And what changes can be brought about for them to attend school?
8. The research did not include focus group discussion which could have filled the gaps where documented information lacked.

CHAPTER II:
STATUS OF EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN: WHERE DOES PAKISTAN STAND?



STATUS OF EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN: WHERE DOES PAKISTAN STAND?

Government of Pakistan has officially endorsed global mandates to promote education for all and gender equity. National development policies and programs in all sectors including education are formulated in conformity to the United Nations Convention on Rights of Children, Convention on Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women and 4th Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995 and the UN Millennium Declaration 2000, to which Pakistan is a signatory.

The Constitution of Pakistan has placed the responsibility of basic education on the state as this obligation is reflected in the Principles of Policy in Article 37, which declares to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of backward classes or areas and remove illiteracy to provide free compulsory secondary education (1). National Plan of Action for Education for All 2001-2015 and National Plan of Action for Women 1998-2002 establishes a set of priority actions formulated to help achieve the agenda for universalization of education and empowerment of women (2).

Despite constitutional and policy commitments to promote literacy and education, for most of the past five decades, statistics on state of education and public spending are mind boggling. Educational funding by the Government of Pakistan has remained stagnant at an average of 2% of GNP over the past ten years while the recommended allocation for developing countries is about 4 %. Enrolment in government schools continues to fall due to out-dated curriculum and text books, damaged buildings and absent teachers. Literacy rate has been improving albeit at a very slow pace, a little over 1 per cent per annum over the last decade with considerable urban-rural and provincial differences. The number of literates has increased from 16 per cent in 1951 to 51.6 per cent in 2003(3). Moreover at annual population growth rate of 2.1 per cent, population in Pakistan increases by approximately 3.1 million every year, third fastest growth rate in the world, of whom only half have access to formal education. Of the 149 million population, over 60 million are illiterate, 41% males and 70% females. Of 18 million school going aged 5 to 9 years children, 6 million are out of school, half of whom are girls.

Comparison with other countries of the South Asian region reveals that Pakistan is at the bottom of the ranking of countries with adult literacy rate at 51 per cent. Even the ratio of female to male enrolment at 0.6 per cent, is the lowest in the South Asian region and suggests a sizable bias in favour of males(4).

At 134 position of 175 in terms of Human Development Index, Pakistan ranks among the 12 countries in the world that spend less than 2% of GDP on education and therefore among the bottom 15 countries with respect to education indicators(5)

It is also a cause of concern that public spending on education in Pakistan has declined from 2.6% in 1996-97 to 1.7% of GDP at present; net enrolment rate has declined from 46 per cent to 42 per cent over the last decade which generally exhibits a declining trend over the years. The rural-urban disparity in gross enrolment rates has widened during the 1990s and over-all drop-out rate has increased steadily from 40% in 1999-2000 at national level which is higher among girls compared to boys. Apart from a small increase in GER for girls, there has been no significance progress in this regard(6).

Policies to promote literacy and education have been promulgated from time to time. Literacy and education initiatives taken during various socio-economic development plans included universalization of primary education, revision of school curriculum in accordance with urban/rural requirements, nationalization of private education institutions in order to have a uniform and standardized education, adopting Urdu as medium of instruction, expansion of Mosque schools, social welfare institutions to provide free boarding and lodging to students with religious and basic education. In 1990s, the Social Action Program was launched to expand and consolidate social services specially education and health. The above policies failed to achieve desired results due to inadequate fund allocations, slow and untimely releases, inefficient implementing machinery, lack of commitment and incentives, highly centralized system and absence of monitoring, evaluation and accountability process. Successive failures of the promises made in every plan and education policy and the practice of missing well marked deadlines have now created a credibility gap.

Being illiterate is not an individual disability, it is a cause of national concern. The most significant challenges to Public Policy today lies in combating over-population, poverty and gender imbalances. The solution to these problems lies in investment in human capital and preparing the critical mass of educated manpower to steer the country through all these challenges.

Education Sector Reforms (ESR) program is a short-term perspective of National of Education Policy of 1998-2010 and Ten Year Perspective Development Plan (2001-2011) of Government of Pakistan. ESR is a comprehensive sector-wide program for increased access, enhanced equity and improved quality at all levels of education. It also serves as a foundation to achieve three *Education for All* goals a) universal primary education b) adult literacy c) early childhood care. To this end, Compulsory Primary Education is being introduced gradually through an Ordinance, where facilities are available. This program has embarked upon national reform agenda for education laying great stress on seven thrust areas i) Universal Primary Education ii) Adult literacy iii) Technical Stream in Secondary Education iv) Public Private Partnership v) Establishment of Polytechnic Institutes vi) Mainstreaming Madrassahs vii) Quality Assurance. The guiding principles of ESR are derived from the linkages between poverty and education and gender balance in education at all levels. Under these reforms, the budget for education is hoped to increase to 3 percent of GNP.

TRENDS IN LITERACY RATES

Adult literacy rates in Pakistan seem to be improving but at a slow pace. During the last five decades, the literacy rate has increased less than 1 per cent per annum (6).

Trends in Adult Literacy Rates(%)

Year	Total	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
1972	21	30	11	41	14
1981	26	35	16	47	17
1998	41	54	32	63	33
2002	51	57	29	63	34

Sources: Pakistan Census Reports (1972, 1981, 1998) and Economic Survey of Pakistan 2002-2003 Pakistan Integrated Household Survey 2002

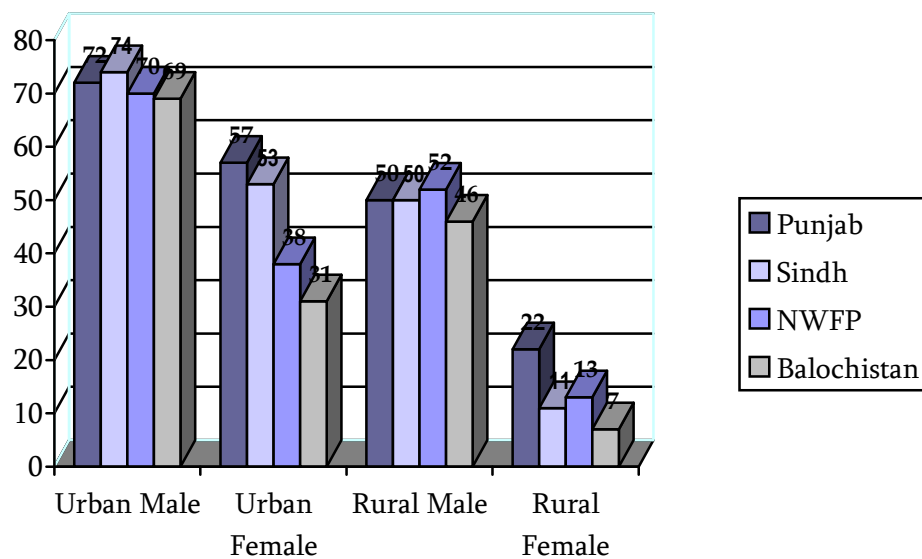
The same is true for urban and rural literacy growth rates

Adult Literacy Rates 2001-2002

	Urban			Rural			Overall		
Pakistan	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
	72	53	63	50	18	34	57	29	51

Source: Pakistan Integrated Household Survey 2002

Literacy growth rate has been less than one third the population growth rate which makes one third of the Pakistan's population illiterate. Number of illiterate persons has increased from 28 million in 1972 to 46 million presently. Women constitute more than 60 percent of this population. Share of female illiterates has been increasing over the years.

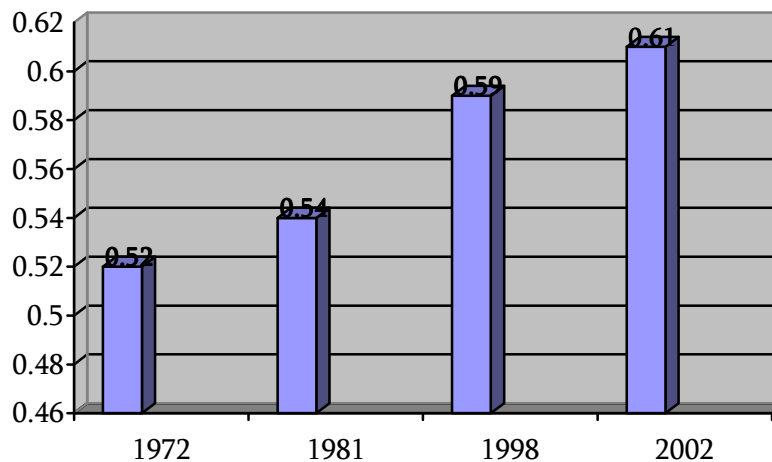


The incidence of high illiteracy especially among women creates an adverse impact on the level of school enrolments and on the quality of human capital. This on account of the fact that education level of parents is known to influence the level of education attained by their children. Strong resistance to sending children to school is shown by illiterate parents.

TRENDS IN MALE FEMALE LITERACY RATES

Literacy rates for males are almost twice as high as for females As per Pakistan Integrated Household Survey 2001-2002, male female literacy rate are 57 and 29 per cent, respectively

Proportion of Females in Illiteracy Population



Source: Population Census Reports(1972,1981,2002)
Pakistan Integrated Household Survey 2002

The national GER and NER does not reveal wide deviation between genders, as the enrolment for the boys remained stagnant over the past decade and there was a marginal increase in female enrolment.

TRENDS IN URBAN RURAL LITERACY RATES

There already exists wide divergence in the urban-rural literacy levels. Of the provinces, Punjab leads at 44% while Balochistan lags at 32%. The Urban literacy rate was recorded as 63 per cent as compared to 34 per cent for rural areas for the year 2002-2003(7). The rural-urban gap towards literacy and education is still wide.

TRENDS IN ENROLEMENT RATES

Growth in enrolment rates has been stagnant. During the last decade, Gross Enrolment Primary Rates have shown sluggish growth. It has increased by five percentage point at less than one per cent per annum from 69 per cent in 1993 to 74 per cent in 2000(8). Growth in primary rates declined in 1990s as compared to the 1980s.

Though enrolment rate has increased for girls from 52 per cent in 1993 to 60 per cent in 2000, but the gender gap is still wide.

Growth in Primary Enrolment

	Urban			Rural			Overall		
Pakistan	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001
Pakistan	69	69	70	71	72	72	71	74	74
Male	85	82	83	84	85	86	82	88	84
Female	52	55	56	57	58	58	58	60	63

Source: Social Development in Pakistan-2003

National Enrolment Rate

	1980-1990			1993-2000		
Pakistan	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
	6.4	6.0	7.2	3.4	2.9	4.3

Source: Social Development in Pakistan-2003

National Net Enrolment rate has declined from 44 per cent in 1995 to 42 per cent in 1997 and then remained stagnant until 2000. National Net Primary Enrolment Rate for boys declined from 49 per cent in 1991 to 46 per cent in 2002, while that for girls has remained almost stagnant, varying between 37 and 38 per cent during this period.

Trends in Net Primary Enrolment Rates(%)

Pakistan	1991	1995	1997	1999	2002
Total	43	44	42	42	42
Male	49	49	46	47	46
Female	37	38	37	37	38

Source: Pakistan Integrated Household Survey (various issues)

Persistently low levels of primary enrolment have led to an increase in the population of out of school children in the 5-9 age group. According to estimates based on Pakistan Integrated Household Survey (PIHS) 2002 data, there are 50 million out of school children out of whom about 18 million children fall in this age group. Of these children 11.8 million get actually enrolled in school and approximately 6 million never go to school, over half of whom are girls. This further accelerates the problem. The share of girls in the total number of school children has increased during the last two decades, rising from 49.4 per cent in 1981 to 50.9 per cent in 1998.

TRENDS IN PARTICIPATION RATE

Out of 105 districts, there are 30 districts in Pakistan which have less than 20 % and only seven districts which have more than 60% participation rate at primary level. All districts of the two provinces NWFP and Balochistan have less than 60% participation rate(9).

Despite achievements, the participation rate has not improved and did not exceed 60% set against the target 100% net participation rate by the year 2000. This implies over 6 million children of 5-9 age group were never enrolled in school and half of the 11.8 million that are enrolled may drop out before completing primary education (10).

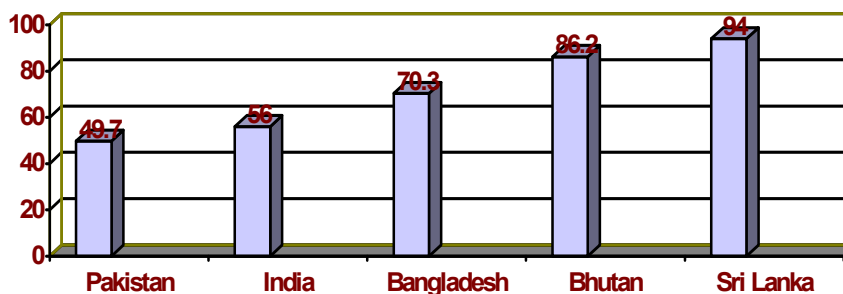
GROSS PRIMARY ENROLMENT RATE-1991-1999						
	1991			1999		
	Overall	Boys	Girls	Overall	Boys	Girls
Pakistan	73	87	59	71	80	61
Urban	92	97	87	94	95	92
Rural	66	83	47	63	75	50

Source: Pakistan National Human Development Report 2003, UNDP, Pakistan

The table indicates Pakistan has one of the lowest survival rate at the fifth grade. At this rate, the total number of out of school children may reach above 14 million by the year 2004.

Survival Rate: A Comparison

Country	Pakistan	India	Bangladesh	Bhutan	Sri Lanka
Survival Rate	49.7	56.0	70.3	86.2	94.0



TRENDS IN RETENTION RATE

The survival rate up to Grade V is only 49.7% in Pakistan while the repetition rate for each grade in the primary schools is about 15.74% (12). Keeping in view population projections, we may add 108.7 million non-literates by 2025 to the total population. Keeping in view population growth factor and lack of significant acceleration to adjust non-enrolled, drop-out children along with illiterates.

TRENDS IN DROP-OUT RATES

Another serious problem in education in Pakistan is the very high percentage of students who drop out. The drop-out rate is defined as *the percentage of students who dropout from school before reaching Grade V*. The dropout rates are not only alarmingly high but have been increasing over time. At the national level the dropout rate has increased from 40% in 1996-97 to 54 % in 1999-2000. Drop outs are high among girls and are increasing at a higher pace relative to boys. Currently 44 per cent of the boys and 56 of the girls leave the school before reaching the fifth Grade. Male children attend an average of 3.8 years of school while female children receive an average of 1.3 years of schooling(13).

The problem is intense in public schools whereas the private schools have performed better.

Trends in Drop out Rates within Public Primary Schools

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Pakistan	40	44	48	54
Male	41	43	48	51
Female	38	46	49	59

Source: NEMIS, Development Statistics and Education Statistics

PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS

Availability of public schools and teachers has not been satisfactory over the past decade. In 1992-93, there was one public school for 248 students in the 5-14 age group which has now increased to 264 children in 1999-2000(14). Provinces as N.W.F.P. and Punjab register better accessibility to schools than Sindh and Balochistan.

Availability of Public Schools and Teachers

Year	Population per (5-14) School		Population (5-14) per Teacher		Population (5-14) per Female Teacher		Ratio of Male to Female Teachers	
	1992-93	1999-00	1992-93	1999-00	1992-93	1999-00	1992-93	1999-00
Pakistan	248	264	70	66	168	165	0.47	0.53

Source: NEMIS(various issues)

THE EXISTING DELIVERY SYSTEM

In Pakistan, primary education is provided through public and private schools.

Public Sector

Primary education is the responsibility of the provincial governments. However, literacy programs are organized at the federal level. The provincial education departments have the mandate to provide elementary schooling (Grade 1-8). The management structure varies from province to province. The recent governance reforms has devolved the power and responsibilities of education and literacy to the District Governments. District Education Officers are the key managers in the district. The Literacy Department would spearhead the literacy campaign. The federal government through Ministry of Education would continue to coordinate the program.

Under the devolution program, the Provincial Planning and Development Departments will regulate investment budgets and plan for the sector while the provincial Finance Departments will provide current budgets. The personnel and fiscal management is within the District Education Office. Pre and Post Devolution State in the elementary education and literacy setup is as follows:

Features of the Management Structure-Pre and Post Devolution

Pre Devolution	Post Devolution
Elementary Education Provincial subject Policy at provincial tier District based implementation by provincial line departments	Elementary Education Provincial/District subject Policy at provincial tier Implementation devolved to District Government with local autonomy and authority
Literacy Federal program Implementation by Federal Commission on the districts through NGOs/CBOs	Literacy Federal Program Implementation through the newly constituted Literacy Department\ at the district tier through NGOs/CBOs

Box I

Private Sector

The private sector occupies a significant share in the delivery of elementary education. The latest census of private educational institutions indicates that there are 36,096 private institutions in the country. Of these, 935 are in the general category, of which 93% are providing primary and elementary education. It is estimated private schools account for 285 of total enrolment. Approximately 61% of the total private institutions are located in the urban areas whereas 39% are in rural areas(15).

Characteristics of Quality and Standard Schools Categories

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Responses
Corporate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professionally managed High quality high voluntary commitment brand image leading to demand focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High fee Small scale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage introduction of scholarship scheme Provide matching funds fro scholarships Encourage financing
Missionary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High quality High voluntary commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Fees Small scale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A above
Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderate to high quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select clientele High cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above
NGO/Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderate to high at low fees Low cost per student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small scale Dependent on external support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support professional management Develop brand name Mobilize volunteers
Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderate quality Moderate fees Low cost per student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adverse selection Weak inspection Monitoring system Poor technical and other support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage shift to formal management Establish effective inspection and support systems Provide matching funds
Government High Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low fees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderate to low quality High student-teacher ratios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professionalize management Enable fundraising and mobilization of other volunteer support Establish system of parental involvement
Government Primary Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low fees Universal availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education Sector Reforms

Box II

The above trends indicate that despite slight improvement in certain areas, overall educational performance of Pakistan has not been satisfactory. In terms of education indicators Pakistan does not compare favorably with other countries of the South Asian region. Disparities also exist among the provinces, regions, gender, public and private sectors. Various plans and policies formulated over the years have so far not been successful in achieving the desired objectives and unfortunately today low level of public spending, lack of access to education facilities, low levels of literacy, enrolment and high drop out rates characterize the education sector in Pakistan.

The recurrent unit cost per student in NPA for EFA is Rs. 2000 per year. The total allocation to this sector, Rs. 30 billion suffices to cater to approximately 15 million students. To cater 25 million children of elementary school GOP would need Rs.50 billion annually(16)

Taking cognizance of the failure of the public education system to meet the country's needs, Government of Pakistan has embarked upon an ambitious national reform agenda on Education Sector Reforms underpinned by the poverty reduction strategy and human development strategy to:

- Universalize primary education
- Improve quality of education through curriculum reform, teacher education and training, reform of exam and assessment process
- Strengthen technical, vocational and higher education in Pakistan
- Increase literacy amongst youth and out of school children
- Mainstream *Madrassahs* into Pakistan's general education system
- Expand Public Private Partnerships in education in order to increase quality education at all levels and to meet demand for education.

Multi-lateral and bilateral donor support is also becoming available to support Government of Pakistan's Education Sector Reforms either through direct financing, technical assistance or debt swaps for education. Assistance is currently being provided by the Asian Development Bank, The World Bank, Islamic Development Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF, Aus AID, CIDA, EU, GTZ, JICAA, Royal Norwegian Embassy. International NGOs as Save the Children, Action Aid and Oxfam are also active in the education sector(17).

FACTORS AFFECTING LITERACY IN PAKISTAN



As we approach the 21st century, we hear the quite steps of a rising revolution for gender equality. The basic parameters of such a revolution have already changed. Women have greatly expanded their capabilities over the last few decades through a liberal investment in their education. At the same time, women are acquiring much greater control over their lives through dramatic improvements in reproductive health. They stand ready and prepared to assume greater economic and political responsibilities. And technological advances and democratic processes are on their side in this struggle. Progress in technology is already overcoming the handicaps women suffer in holding jobs in the future industrial societies will be based not on muscular strength but on skill and discipline. And democratic transition that is sweeping the globe will make sure that women exercise more political power as they begin to realize the real value of the majority votes that they control. It is quite clear that the 21st century will be a century of much greater gender equality than the world has ever seen before”

Dr. Mahbub-ul-Haq

FACTORS AFFECTING LITERACY IN PAKISTAN

Owing to certain factors at the societal or state level, policy or implementation level and demand or supply level, socio-political milieu in Pakistan has not accorded sufficient weight to education thereby education has failed to find its place in the matrix of policy priorities. Though there have certainly been consistent efforts on part of various governments to expand education but in-sufficient public expenditure on education, weak implementation of education policies, systematic weaknesses of the public sector delivery, un-equal streams of schools, poverty and demographic factors have impeded the process of creating a literate society leaving targets unachieved.

A brief account of these factors is given below.

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON PRIMARY EDUCATION

The Constitution of Pakistan has placed the responsibility of basic education on the state as this obligation is reflected in the *Principles of Policy* in Article 37, which declares to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of backward classes or areas and remove illiteracy to provide free compulsory secondary education (1).

The education sector in Pakistan has suffered from persistent and severe under investment by the government throughout the last five decades. Public spending on education at present stands at 1.8% of GDP as against 4% of GNP set forth by UNESCO for literacy. According to the UNDP, Pakistan is one of the 12 countries in the world which spends less than 2 % of GDP on education (2).

Over the past years, non-availability of sufficient public funds has been creating bottle necks in success of education programs specially of primary education.

Public Sector Allocations for Education

Plan Period	Allocations made for Education
First Five Year Development Plan 1955-60	None
Second Five Year Development Plan 1960-65	None
Third Five Year Development Plan 1965-70	None
Non Plan Period (1970-78)	2.3 million (in Rupees)
Fifth Five Year Development Plan 1978-83	50 million (in Rupees)
Sixth Five Year Development Plan 1983-88	834 million (in Rupees)
Seventh Five Year Development Plan 1988-93	300 million (in Rupees)
Eighth Five Year Development Plan 1993-98	1750 million (in Rupees)
Ninth Five Year Development Plan 1998-2003	12455 million (in Rupees)

Source Literacy Trends in Pakistan, UNESCO-2003

From 1959 to 1981, education's share of education of GNP rose from one percent to just over two (3). The first three development plans (1955-1970) did not contain any allocations for literacy. The Fifth Five Year Plan target (1978-83) of raising this to three percent never happened. However, there was a paradigm shift in public spending on education under the Sixth Five Year Plan(1983-88). The essence of the sixth plan education strategy was to ensure a quantum jump in the spread of primary education and to improve quality through consolidation and restructuring of higher education. The plan was guided by the desire to create a literate society. This plan approached primary education with earnestness and urgency that it always deserved but never received. Under this plan specific allocations were made for the development programs in education sector and manpower and funds were also earmarked for extending grant-in-aid for supporting private efforts in establishing educational facilities (4). During this period many new schools were opened and the enrollment in class I-V also increased Concrete programs for rapid development of women were designed for each sector including education. Under the Seventh Five Year Plan (1988-93), education was seriously addressed and allocations were increased for this purpose. Under the 8th Five Year Plan and the National Education Policy of 1998-2010, literacy and mass education were addressed and allocations were also increased. But Pakistan still lags behind when compared to other countries of the South Asian region.

Allocation for Education as of GDP Comparison with other countries

Country	% Age of GDP
Mongolia	8.5
Maldives	8.1
Iran	5.4
Malaysia	5.1
South Korea	4.2
Thailand	4.0
India	3.7
Sri Lanka	3.1
Nepal	2.9
Afghanistan	2.3
Bangladesh	2.2
Pakistan	2.2

Source: E-9 Conference on Education for All 1997 as cited in HCR 2002

Primary Education in any country has a direct bearing on the literacy rate of that country as the Table below indicates:

Country	Per Capita GNP (US\$)	Public Expenditure on Education as % of GNP	Public Expenditure on Primary Education as % of GNP	Public Expenditure on Primary Education as % of total Educational Budget	Adult Literacy Rate	Participation Rate in Grade I	Survival Rate to Grade 5
Bangladesh	370	2.2	1.2	43.6	41.0	64.6	70.1
Bhutan	590	4.1	1.8	61.1	47.0	17.5	86.0
India	450	3.2	1.5	50.4	57.0	67.5	45.2
Kazakhstan	1340	4.5	1.8	26.2	99.9	98.3	92.0
Kyrgyzstan	380	6.8	1.0	22.12	97.0	52.9	73.9
Malaysia	3670	5.3	1.5	40.1	93.7	63.2	93.4
Maldives	1960	6.4	2.4	38.9	97.0	96.8	98.0
Nepal	240	3.2	1.4	61.0	42.0	53.7	44.0
Sri Lanka	850	3.4	2.43	16.60	92.0	94.0	97.0
Pakistan	440	2.7	1.1	51.8	43.2	66.1	50.0

Source: as cited in Literacy Trends in Pakistan UNESCO May 2003.

Countries like Malaysia, Maldives, Indonesia, Thailand spend about 4 percent of GNP on education have literacy rates between 75 and 100 %. A major indicator of the GNP is spent on primary education which has a direct bearing on the literacy rate. Countries like Bhutan, Bangladesh Nepal and Pakistan invest about 1-2 percent of GNP on primary education and basic education and have relatively low literacy rates as compared to other countries in the above table.

Though allocations for literacy are meager yet if 4% of GNP as planned in the Education Policy is actually spent, a more positive picture is expected.

EDUCATION POLICY MAKING

The government's commitment to education was declared at the National Educational Conference in 1947, which was the first step towards defining education policies and goals in Pakistan. Since then there have been seven national education policies, nine Five Years Plans and several national-level schemes relating to education. However, a review of the history of education policymaking and planning shows that each round of policymaking repeats the same pattern: the importance of education is iterated, the failure of past efforts is lamented, the main issues in education reform are highlighted and new plans are proposed to meet new targets. Yet the targets have remained elusive to-date.

List of Education Policies, Plans, Programs and Schemes

- National Educational Conference, 1947
- National Plan of Education Development, 1951-57
- First Five Year Plan, 1955-60
- Report of the Commission on National Education, 1959
- Second Five Year Plan, 1960-65
- Third Five Year Plan, 1965-70
- New Education Policy, 1970
- The Education Policy, 1972-80
- Fifth Five Year Plan, 1978-83
- National Education Policy and Implementation Program, 1979
- Literacy and Mass Education Commission, 1981
- 10 Point Program, 1983
- Sixth Five Year Plan, 1983-88
- National Literacy Plan, 1984-86
- Drop-in Schools, 1986-89
- Nation-wide Literacy Program-1986-90
- Nai Roshni Schools, 1985-90
- Seventh Five Year Plan, 1988-93
- National Educational Policy, 1992
- Eighth Five Year Plan, 1993-98
- National Educational Policy, 1998-2010
- Education Sector Reforms Action Plan 2001-04
- Education Sector Reforms Action Plan 2001-05

Source: The State of Education in Pakistan 2002-2003 Social Development and Policy Centre, Karachi



The policy dialogue commenced with the 1947 National Education Conference which emphasized the need for free and compulsory primary education and for adult education to solve the problem of illiteracy over a period of 25 years i.e. by 1972. The six-year National Plan of Educational Development 1951-57, which proposed to make 2.8 million adults literate every year, followed. However, a review of the Plan shows that the target to achieve 2.8 million adult literate each year remained unachieved rather the literacy ratio declined by 0.1 percentage point, from 16.4 per cent in 1951 to 16.3 per cent at the end of the decade(5).

Literacy Targets: Shifting Goal Posts

Literacy Targets	Target(%)	Target Date
National Education Policy 1979	35	1983
National Literacy Plan 1984-86	33	1986
Nation-wide Literacy Program 1986-90	54	1990
Nai Roshni Schools 1986-90	31	1990
Seventh Five Year Plan 1988-93	40	1993
Seventh Five Year Plan 1988-93	80	2000
National Education Policy 1992	70	2002
Eighth Five Year Plan 1993-98	48	1998
National Education Policy 1998-2010	55	2003
ESRAP 2001-05	60	2005

Sources: Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Education September (2002)
ESRAP(2001-05), Bengali, K(1999)

Further a review of literacy rate targets show that these have been set by a total of 10 policy documents over the last quarter century. The Nai Roshni Schools Program, 1986-90, set the most modest target of 31 per cent to be achieved by 1990. The Seventh Five Year Plan, 1988-93, set the most ambitious target of 80 per cent, to be achieved by 2000. All remained unachieved and in contrast to these targets, the current literacy rate still stands at 51 per cent (6).

With respect to Universal Primary Education, the First Five Year Plan, 1955-60, proposed the target at universal level to be achieved by 1980; however, the Education Policy, 1972-80, revised the target to 1979 for boys and 1984 for girls. The Fifth Five Year Plan, 1978-1983, set the target period for 1986-87; however one year after the launching of the Plan, the National Education Policy of 1979 extended the target to 1992, while the National Educational Policy of 1992, extended it even further to 2002. Towards the end of 2003, Universal Primary Education is still an objective to be achieved.

Universal Primary Education Targets

Plan/Policy	Target Year
First Five Year Plan: 1955-60	1975-80
New Education Policy 1970	1980
Education Policy 1972-80	
Boys	1979
Girls	1984
Fifth Five Year Plan: 1978-83	1986-87
National Education Policy 1979	1992
National Education Policy 1992	2002

Sources: Bengali, K(1999)

The National Plan of Educational Development, 1951-57, stipulated the enrolment rate target(for children aged 6-11 years) at 66 per cent; the primary enrolment rate in 1955 was 43 per cent. The First Five Year Plan, 1955-60, proposed to raise the primary enrolment rate to 49 per cent, but attained only 36 per cent by the end of the plan of 1960, even below the rate realized in 1955. the Second Five Year Plan, 1960-65, proposed a target of 56 per cent by 1965, but achieved only 45 per cent as the primary enrolment rate. The Third Five Year plan, 1965-70, proposed a target of 70 per cent by that year; however, the rate had dropped to 39 per cent by 1970. Between the Sixth Five Year Plan commencing in 1988 and the Eighth Five Year Plan completed in 1998, targets varied from 75 to 96 per cent. During the 1983-1998 period, the enrolment rate moved from an aggregate of 48 per cent to 86 per cent for boys and 58 per cent for girls. In 2001, the primary enrolment rate was reported to be 74 per cent: 84 per cent for boys and 63 per cent for girls.



Primary Education Targets: Shifting Goal Posts

Plan/Policy	Target	Year	Achieved
National Education Policy Development 1951-57	67	1957	43(1955)
First Year Plan 1955-60	49	1960	36(1960)
Second Five Year Plan 1960-65	56	1965	45(1965)
Third Five Year Plan 1965-70	70	1970	39(1970)
Sixth Five Year Plan 1983-88	75	1988	69(1988)
Eighth Five Year Plan 1993-98			
Boys	96	1998	86(1998)
Girls	82	1998	58(1998)
National Education Policy 1998-2010			
Net	90	2003	
Gross	105	2010	
ESRAP 2001-05			
Net	76	2005	
Gross	100	2005	

Sources: Bengali, K(1999)

SYSTEMATIC WEAKNESS IN PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

The over-centralized management of the system of education has traditionally maintained control over financing and decision making with little role for district and local authorities. Until recent devolution plan, each provincial Department of Education was responsible for service delivery and decisions including recruitment of teachers, procurement of school furniture and signing small contracts for school improvements.

Even minor disciplinary problems were referred to provincial authorities. Over-centralization compromised the quality of service delivery by weakening the relationships of accountability between policy maker- government sector responsible for education, service provider-schools and clients-parents and students.

Moreover, adult literacy and non-formal education has not been institutionalized in Pakistan. There are many far flung areas where basic education is imparted through non-formal means like opening up of a home school, or teaching children at work. The non-formal school lack physical infrastructure and resources but yet the contribution in the field of spreading education is commendable. Children sitting on floor mats are taught dreams high. Unfortunately, there has been absence of a system of equivalence of certification for non-formal basic education institutions to absorb these children into formal higher schools, therefore non-formal school children were left out of the mainstream schooling.



A Non-Formal School in Islamabad

The 2002 UNDP Human Development Report argues that “ Countries can promote human development for all only when they have governance systems that are fully accountable to all people and when all people can participate in the debates and decisions that shape their lives” (7) Since long the institutional arrangements and processes of decision making in Pakistan had limited opportunities for meaningful participation at the grass root level but with the present devolution and governance reforms of the Government of Pakistan, greater participation of at the lowest tier is expected. The district and sub-district level of government now have greatly enhanced administrative and fiscal responsibilities in the education sector. Each of the country’s district has a specific education department for literacy to reinforce the fact higher literacy level is one of the highest national priorities today.

POVERTY

Education deprivation and poverty go hand in hand. In Pakistan, about one third of the population is poor and as such one in every three Pakistanis lives below the poverty line. The incidence of poverty is significantly higher in rural areas. Of the four provinces, Balochistan has the lowest average income where as Punjab has the highest per capita income (10).

Moreover, poverty tends to be concentrated in large families that have few earners, high dependency ratios, female headed households and families who don't hold assets. Within the families, women, elderly and children are the most vulnerable. Much of the poverty is chronic and almost 70 percent of the country's poor households are headed by someone who is illiterate, elderly or female (10).

The “*poverty of opportunity*” that is of education and health is more pronounced than that of poverty of income. Evidence shows that the incidence of poverty of opportunity is increasing for women then men. In the field of health, the inverse sex ratio in Pakistan, 108 males to 100 females is in sharp contrast to the global norm (10). The literacy gap between male and female that was 19% in 1981 and stands at 24 % in 1998(11).

It is very expensive to be poor. One clear manifestation of this truth is that poverty is a major barrier to schooling. It costs about half the annual income of poor rural families to send one child to primary school for one year.



Poverty and Out of School Children

Household income of the family affects parent's decisions to prioritize expenditures on the education of their children. Even if there is a minimal tuition fee charged in schools, expenditures on uniform, textbooks and other materials serve as constraints. It is important to examine the contribution of poverty in restricting school enrolment.

Reasons for Never Attending School for Children 10-18 (%)

	Pakistan		Punjab		Sindh		NWFP		Balochistan	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Parents didn't allow	3	36	3	33	0	30	8	48	6	55
Too expensive	40	26	42	35	42	17	35	20	28	9
Too far (distance)	8	14	5	12	11	20	3	11	19	9
Had to help at work/home	7	7	8	6	4	7	8	4	5	12
Child not willing	29	7	26	5	33	9	28	8	22	2
Others	13	10	16	9	10	17	18	9	20	13

Source: PIHS (2002)

The single largest reason for boys for not attending schools, 40 per cent, is that education is too expensive. Whereas in NWFP and Balochistan other “reasons” hold a high share. The results for girls is significantly different. The principal reason for girls for not attending school is parental permission. This stands at 36 per cent well above all other factors affecting school attendance.

The table below shows a progressive increase in boy's and girl's enrolment rates with increase in income level. The enrolment ratio for boys is the highest in the highest income quintile and is more than twice that of boys in the lowest quintile. The ratio for girls is three times as much.

School Enrolment Rates by Income Groups

Income Quintile	Net Enrolment Ratio		Ratio of Boys to Girls
	Boys	Girls	
1	21.0	13.9	60.9
2	27.2	20.4	70.2
3	31.6	23.4	67.3
4	35.9	31.8	82.7
5	45.1	44.7	89.4

Source: PIHS(2002)

Opportunity costs is another impediment. Half of the children who enroll in Grade I, drop-out before completing primary education that is completing five years of basic education upto Grade V. One reason is that at age 7+ they become a second hand in family earning or a help in domestic work.

The share of household income contributed by the second earner is an important factor in the household's shifting out of poverty or being pushed into deeper poverty.

Percentage of Second Earners within each economic category by Education level						
Economic Status	No Education (%)	Upto Primary (%)	Middle (%)	Matric (%)	Higher (%)	Total
Extremely Poor	81.4	13.4	1	1	3.1	100
Poor	77.5	10.9	4.7	4.4	2.5	100
Non Poor	58.9	14.4	8.7	8.7	9.1	100

Source: NHDR/PIDE Survey 2001

The Incomes of the Principal and Second Earners

	Extremely Poor	Poor	Non-Poor	Total
Total earned income	15,339	35,550	96,109	36,185
Major earner income	14,608	29,566	69,447	29,652
Second earner income	617	4,759	17,119	4,983
Share of major earner(%)	95.2	83.2	72.3	80.8
Share of second earner(%)	4.0	13.4	17.8	13.6

Source: NHDR/PIDE Survey 2001

The above table shows the percentage of the second earner in households income is 13.4 for the poor category. When this share increases the household enters the category of non-poor (17.8 per cent) and when it falls substantially(4.0 percent) the household becomes extremely poor. This is manifested in the fact that as many as 83.4 per cent of the extremely poor and 73.5 per cent of the poor are illiterate and another 7.6 and 13.9 per cent in the category of the poor and non-poor have merely primary education (12).



Out of school children helping family as second hand earners

The Education levels of the various sections of the population

All Pakistan

Average of Sample	Extremely Poor	Poor	Non Poor	Total
Education Level of Major earners	%	%	%	
No Education	83.4	73.5	50.3	73.6
Primary	7.6	13.9	14.6	11.6
Middle	3.6	4.2	10.7	5.0
Matric	3.1	5.0	11.0	5.2
Higher Education	2.3	3.5	13.4	4.6
Education Level of second earners				
No Education	84.0	78.5	51.4	70.9
Primary	10.6	11.4	15.7	12.6
Middle	2.1	4.5	9.5	5.7
Matric	2.1	3.5	11.4	5.6
Higher Education	1.1	2.1	11.9	5.1

Source: NHDR/PIDE Survey 2001

Because of the status of education and low level of skills, household earners are absorbed only in occupations where the productivity levels and wages are low. It is also noteworthy that the poor are mostly illiterate.



Poverty: Is going out of school a cause or effect of it? Dal Muhammad, a thirteen year boy, hails from *Tal* and is settled in one of the slum areas of Islamabad. He went to school but on his father's insistence was out of school after completing Grade I. He and his mother both resisted but father's decision prevailed. His father thinks that herding sheep is more useful then going to school. Dal wants to go to school but as he is a second earner in the family, has no option to say "No".

The causes of female poverty are complex and inextricably linked to cultural taboos and gender imbalances. An overview of women's income earning capacities in Pakistan establishes the fact that they earn less than men and their unpaid labour input is six times higher than men (13).

Contribution of Women in Total Earned Income

Average of Sample	Extremely Poor	Poor	Non Poor	Total
All Pakistan	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.05
Urban	0.01	0.03	0.07	0.07
Rural	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.06

Source: NHDR/PIDE Survey 2001

According to a study conducted by the UNICEF, women tend to spend more of their earnings on child care and health than the men.

In a time of growing poverty in the country, there is some room to understand the need of particularly impoverished families to require the addition of wages to cover family's daily needs.

GENDER ISSUES

Education is a basic human right. The UN Charter and Constitution of Pakistan lay down equal provision of education and development opportunities, both for men and women.

Education ensures best start to life but extant customs, traditional ascription of male and female roles and family restrictions often hold back girls from attending school thus impeding girls to take the best start. In particular, *Son Preference* results in discrimination against daughters. Parents often not see education as a human right but as their discretionary power to send their daughters to school or not and therefore despite several efforts of the Government of Pakistan and international development organizations, the female literacy rate is far from equal to literacy rate of males in Pakistan.

Gender imbalance is compounded by the fact that there are fewer schools for girls, ratio of female teachers and women professionals in education remains very low. Some pocket improvements have been made to enhance enrollment and participation rate but still its a long way to achieve equity and equality of educational opportunities for both males and females.

Gender parity in education continues to be elusive. Out of 60 million children out of school, 48% are girls (14). Gender disparity in education is more pronounced amongst girls living in poverty. Thus girls are in double jeopardy, affected by both gender discrimination and poverty.

GENDER DISPARITY

PRIMARY SCHOOLS (1990-2001)

Gender	1990-91	2000-01	Growth Rate
Boys Schools	83,000	106,900	29%
Girls Schools	31,100	58,800	89%

ENROLMENT (1990-2001)

Gender	1990-91	2000-01	Growth Rate
Boys Schools	7.162	11.720	64%
Girls Schools	3,675	8.679	136%

PRIMARY TEACHERS(1990-2001)

Gender	1990-91	2000-01	Growth Rate
Boys Schools	185,100	236,000	27%
Girls Schools	92,700	137,900	49%

Source: Economic Survey of Pakistan 2000-2001, Government of Pakistan

The negative effects of not attending school are greater for girls than boys as its consequences are transferred to the next generation.

Pakistan's position internationally is seen in UNDP'S Gender Related Development Index where Pakistan ranked 120 out of 173 countries in 2002. The Gender Parity Index has deteriorated from where Pakistan ranked in 1999 at 116 out of 174 countries. This also indicates that women in Pakistan have had a very limited role in development of the country which has also adversely affected day to day affairs of women like child care, economic participation and social mobility. The wealthiest economies of the world developed through making significant investments in education of women. The under utilization of women's potential, experience and capacities is a hindrance for economic development in the country.

The Millennium Development Goal of gender parity in primary and secondary education is set for 2005, ten years prior to others

Girl's education is also linked to other facets of human development as health and hygiene, water and sanitation, nutrition, empowerment and the trickle down effect i.e. the likelihood to send their children to school. Girl's education adds value to her work, increases her work's productivity and makes her less vulnerable to intra-family violence or outside harassment.

“ a major effort must be made to convince people that the subjugation of women is not natural but a costly and reversible human choice”

Seventh Five Year Plan (1988-93), Government of Pakistan

Over the last 20 years, a quiet revolution has taken place in Pakistan. More girls are now going to school and parental demand for girl's schooling is growing. More women are working in the formal sector when parents would have previously have forbidden it.

PARTICIPATION RATE

Out of 105 districts in Pakistan, there are 30 districts which have less than 20 % and only seven districts which have more than 60% participation rate at primary level. All districts of NWFP and Balochistan have less then 60% participation rate(15). Inspite of achievements, the participation rate has not improved and did not exceed 60% set against the target 100% net participation rate by the year 2000. This implies 8 million children of 5-9 age group were never enrolled in school and half of the 12 million that are enrolled may drop out before completing primary education.

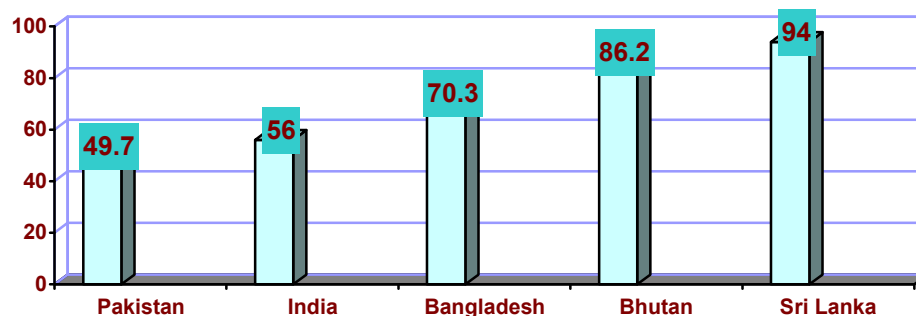
GROSS PRIMARY ENROLMENT RATE-1991-1999						
	1991			1999		
	Overall	Boys	Girls	Overall	Boys	Girls
Pakistan	73	87	59	71	80	61
Urban	92	97	87	94	95	92
Rural	66	83	47	63	75	50

Source: Pakistan National Human Development Report 2003, UNDP, Pakistan

The table indicates Pakistan has one of the lowest survival rate at the fifth grade. At this rate, the total number of out of school children may reach above 14 million by the year 2004.

SURVIVAL RATE: A COMPARISON

Country	Pakistan	India	Bangladesh	Bhutan	Sri Lanka
Survival Rate	49.7	56.0	70.3	86.2	94.0



DROP-OUT RATE

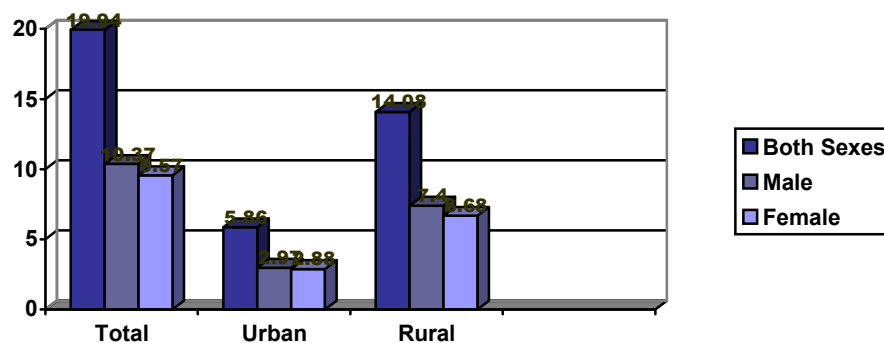
The problem of dropouts from primary schools is an issue that has plagued Pakistan's educational landscape. The drop-out rate is defined as *the percentage of students who dropout from school before reaching Grade V*. The dropout rates are not only alarmingly high but have been increasing over time. At the national level the dropout rate has increased from 40% in 1996-97 to 54 % in 1999-2000(16). Dropout rate is generally high among girls then boys.

RETENTION RATE

The survival rate up to Grade V is only 49.7% in Pakistan while the repetition rate for each grade in the primary schools is about 15.74% (17). Keeping in view population projections, we may add 108.7% million non-literates by 2025 keeping in view population growth factor and lack of significant acceleration to adjust non-enrolled, drop-out children along with illiterates.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC FACTOR

The 1998 Census recorded the population of Pakistan as 132.4 million, adding 46 million increase from the 1981 Census. In 2002, the Government expects population at 146 million with an estimated annual growth rate of 2.10 %, to reach an estimated doubling at a time of 33 years. By 2021 the population is projected to be 198 million.



In addition to this, Pakistan has played the gracious host for over 3.3 million Afghan refugees for the past 23 years. This overall population burden has sapped the much needed resources from the nation's development program.

Over the past decade, there has been a meaningful slowing of the population growth rate and total fertility rate in Pakistan. Statistics show there is a strong relation between fertility rate and level of education of mothers. The educational level of mothers inversely influences family size. The illiterate women in Pakistan have 4.71 children on an average while illiterate and secondary school certificate holder level women have 3.63 –3.21 children (18). However,

the rate is still high and child survivability has improved such that now 70% of the population is below the age of 30 years old and the fastest growing segment of the population is the youth cohort between the ages of 15 and 29. This trend is expected to continue for the next several decades with the estimate that by 2025 the “youth” cohort population will exceed that of today’s population. Besides this the percentage of women in the total population has also consistently increased from 46.2 percent in 1951 to 48% in 1998. Therefore young women also warrant special attention.

Without adequate education, health and nutrition and job opportunities, this demographic trend may become a burden for Pakistan’s future.

BARRIERS TO GIRL'S EDUCATION



No nation has ever liberated itself economically, politically or socially without a sound base of educated women

Dr. Mahbub-ul-Haq

BARRIERS TO GIRL'S EDUCATION

It is universally accepted that unless people at large are liberated through education, there is little hope of any social or economic breakthrough. A number of policy measures have been taken by the Government of Pakistan to redress the problem of illiteracy, particularly of girls, but the situation is alarming in most part of the country. Family pressures, socio-cultural obstacles coupled with a defunct schooling system restrict access even to basic education. Out of 18 million children of primary school going age, 55 % girls enter school and those who do, 50% drop-out within the first five years of schooling. The average duration of school of girls estimated is 0.7% years(1) That is why after 57 years of independence, literacy rate in Pakistan still stands at 51%, amongst the lowest in the developing world.

Reviews of various studies, field surveys and interviews with the stakeholders (parents, students, out-of-school children), service providers (schools, NGOs) and policy makers (government education departments) reveal that both demand and supply factors act as barriers to the girl 's education.

On the demand side, poverty, parent's education, gender discrimination and distance from school are the major barriers for enrolment, attendance and retention in schools. On the supply side, shortage of girls' schools, shortage or absence of female teachers, and poor quality of teaching are major obstacles to girl's education.

DEMAND CONSTRAINTS

POVERTY

"I want to go to school like other children but my parents can't afford it, so I have to work and help support my family" is the most common response one gets from out of school children. According to the Pakistan Integrated Household Survey-2000, a positive relationship exists between household income and school attendance of children (2). The higher the household income, the more the parents prioritize expenditure on education. Tuition fee, howsoever minimal, uniforms, textbooks and other school supplies serve as constraints. In poor and lower middle class families, opportunity costs increase when children become a helping hand in earning family income or in household chores.

Illiteracy amongst the poor is common. Nationwide statistics indicate that the most marginalized group is the poor rural girl of illiterate parents. If a family can afford to educate their children, parents prefer to send their sons to schools than their daughters because only boys are expected to work and financially support the family. Unfortunately, education is not valued in its own right.

The patriarchal structure of Pakistani society designates a man principal role of ‘provider’ to family’s economic needs and as ‘protector’ of its family’s good name. Traditionally women are not active in work involving financial transactions and usually men negotiate

all outside business. In various parts of rural Pakistan, there is resistance to women visibly undertaking remunerative work. Though women contribute towards economic activities as working in agricultural fields, taking care of livestock and farming but this is nowhere reflected in the national statistics (3).

Gender disparity in education is also more pronounced amongst girls living in poverty. Thus, these girls are in double jeopardy, affected by both gender discrimination and poverty.

PREFERENCE FOR EDUCATING SONS

Man’s principal role as “earner” for the family makes parents to invest more on son’s education than daughter’s. Boys are also expected to take care of their parents once they are old. Education is regarded as means to improve earning prospects and thereby the ability of the male members of the family to take care of more dependents.

Although with increased income earning opportunities for girls, the urban areas in Pakistan are seeing more girls attending school than before, yet for the vast majority of girls, the old tradition of leaving school that girls can not take up career lines or remunerative work is still a reality. This leads to drastic fall in secondary and higher level of education amongst girls. The analysis of educational attainment of female reveals that there are only 19 per cent females having attained education upto Matric, 8 per cent Intermediate, 5 per cent Bachelors and only 1.4 per cent MA/MSc (4). According to 1999-2000 Labour Survey, only 3.74 per cent of women are employed in various professions.



Students of a private school in Islamabad

A survey was conducted in the province of N.W.F.P. and Punjab, where fifty families were posed one question: ***"If boys and girls are equal in the eyes of parents, why do most of the parents educate their sons and not the daughters?"*** The following were the responses:

S.#	Responses	Number of families who opined in favor Average of Sample %
1	Educating a girl does not translate into financial gain for her parents.	41
2	It is not customary to educate girls	16
3	Since boys and girls are not equal, there is no point in educating both	9
4	Poverty does not allow educating of girls	29
5	Girls become too independent after becoming educated	14
6	It is good for girls to go to school but not essential	13
7	Girls cannot be educated as they must observe <i>Purdah</i>	23
8	Girls have to do household work and take care of younger brothers and sisters	17
9	There is no proper arrangement for girls' education	29
10	Girls are not intellectually capable	7
11	Education does not help girls in their future life	11
12	It is very odd to send girls to school	5
13	Grandmothers resist their grand daughters education	13
14	Son's education is a productive exercise as girls can't take up remunerative work	41
15	Basic education is important for both boys and girls	31

- *Parents interviewed belonged to the lower middle class and poor families in rural areas of N.W.F.P. and Punjab.*

The above responses reflect that complex and inter-related factors are responsible for low education attainment of girl's education in Pakistan. It transpired that considerably high ratio of parents agreed that basic education was important for both boys and girls, but insisted that boy's education must be a priority, as they have to shoulder economic responsibilities of the family. Both parents, father and mother, opined that better economic position of their sons brings better old age living for them. Opposition to girl's education was based on security concerns, lack of proper school arrangements and long distances to schools. Poverty is another high factor for parents in making a choice to send either a son or a daughter to school. It appeared that strong prejudices against girl's education are waning. Secure school environment and provision of female teachers was the prime concern of the parents.

EDUCATION OF PARENTS

The minimum attainment of literates of Pakistan, a small proportion as they are, is mainly of the level of primary education. Parent's education has a strong influence on children's education, especially of girls. Children of those parents who have obtained some schooling are more likely to attend school as compared to those whose parents have themselves never been to school. This difference is much more pronounced in rural areas compared to urban areas and for girls relative to boys.

I have a Dream!

Zarina, a housemaid in Islamabad works 18 hours a day to support her six children. When asked if she ever went to school, she answered "*once upon a time*". She quit school at the age of seven when her father lost his job and was no longer able to support her schooling. She started working as a housemaid at the age of seven a helping hand to family's income. After marriage at the age of 14, she decided to continue work and send all her children to school, both boys and girls. Today all her children go to school and Zarina is determined to see her eldest daughter become a Nurse, a dream she envisioned for herself.

ALIENATION FROM TRUE ROLE OF A WOMAN

The societal setup in Pakistan ascribes to woman traditional role that of a housewife and motherhood and thereby aspirations, achievements and performance of girls are usually responsive to those stereotyped expectations. Even in schools, the text books present women at home involved in house chores and men out in public making history. Content analysis of text books of various subjects for the primary classes from Grade I to Grade V, showed males in exclusive leading roles in 49 lessons while female took precedence in only 7 lessons (5). These stereotype images of male and female trickled through text books impacts young minds of girls thus limit their aspirations artificially.

In a traditional society like Pakistan, movement of girls is also restricted as they grow and they are taught not to disagree, stay modest and submissive in their behavior. Whereas boys are encouraged to be assertive and are usually assigned outdoor duties. Most families do not encourage participation of women in income generating activities in the formal sector as it is presumed that they may neglect their husbands, children and other domestic responsibilities. It is further presumed that educated girls become arrogant and consider themselves too good for manual or household work.

Social benefits associated with education for women though intangible but certainly increase the economic, social and political opportunities available to them. Education empowers women to take control of their lives. It provides them with greater opportunity and choices to improve the life of also their families. Educated mind is the key to overcome prejudiced customs that neglect need of girls and women and leads to their improved status in society. Educating women is giving them their basic human right.

Female education is strongly connected to reduce child and maternal mortality. Common causes of early childhood diseases are related to unhygienic conditions. Educated mothers are aware of the hygiene requirements. Education also helps to increase her knowledge to control fertility and access family planning and to improve family health. It also improves their ability to manage basic child care and ensure effective diagnosis of diseases.

Educated mothers are more likely to send both girls and boys to school. Many studies suggest that return to girls' education are higher than those for boys.

Ministries of Education and Women Development, Social Development and Special Education are now actively engaged in various reform measures to revise the curriculum and make education more gender sensitive under the Education Sector Reforms and Gender Reform Program (6). Moreover, text books are being revised to represent a more progressive role of women in the Pakistani society. Success stories of various women leaders and professionals now form part of the public text books.

GENERATION CONFLICT

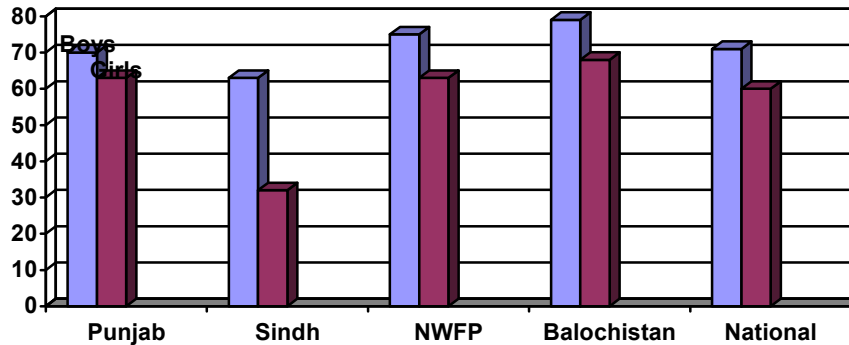
In Pakistan, the joint family system still exists and grandparents have a significant say in the day to day affairs of the family. Of many girls interviewed it was more of grandmother's or grandfather's opposition to their attending of school than their parent's.

SCHOOL DISTANCE AND PARENT'S CONSIDERATION FOR PERSONAL SECURITY OF GIRLS

Poor conditions of learning is one of the major factors considered by the parents for not sending their daughters to school. Distance from home to school is more important deterrent for girls than for boys. In Pakistan's rural Sindh only 31 % of the villages had a girl primary

school within one kilometer of place where girls reside. This reflected in the provincial low rural female literacy ratio of only 13.1% (7)

Pakistan's Rural Localities with a primary school within 1 km(%)



Source Government of Pakistan 1999

The personal security of girls dominate parent's decisions of sending girls to school. Poor roads and limited transportation hinder girl's access to schools. Due to unsafe traveling and inadequate school physical infrastructure in rural communities and even in some urban areas, a threat perception to the personal security of girls debars parents to send their daughters to school.

GIRLS' DOMESTIC WORK

Millions of girls who drop out each year, a large proportion of them leave the school as they serve as a second hand in the household work. Little girls take care of their siblings, fetch water and help mothers in the kitchen. Female drop out rate is high and widening when compared to boys in Pakistan. In 1990-91, the average drop-out rate from Class I to V in Pakistan was as high as 68% for females and 62% for males(8). The biggest drop of girls was from Class II to Class III. The explanation is that elementary reading and writing upto this level is considered sufficient when girl is reaching the age of *Purdah* or Segregation and puberty.



Girls studying in a separate class in a non-formal school

THE SUPPLY SIDE ASPECTS

School and Education System Related Factors:

SHORTAGE OF GIRLS' SCHOOLS

Although there has been a recent policy emphasis on investing in girls schools, there is still a shortage.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN PAKISTAN (1990-2001)

Gender	1990-91	2000-01	Growth Rate
Boys Schools	83,000	106,900	29%
Girls Schools	31,100	58,800	89%

Source: Economic Survey of Pakistan 2000-2001, Government of Pakistan

One of the primary reasons for parents not to send their daughters to school is long distance of the schools from the place where they live. Though the number of boys school is more than girls schools but co-education is not acceptable to many in conservative and rural societies.

SHORTAGE OF WOMEN TEACHERS

The importance of a teacher as key figure in the education process has always been recognized. As early as in 1947, significance of women teachers to promote girl's education was recognized under the All-Pakistan Educational Conference.

In rural areas, the situation is compounded by social norms preventing girls from attending schools where there are no female teachers. Paucity of trained female teachers work in rural areas is a major constraint in girl's enrolments.

STRENGTH OF PRIMARY TEACHERS(1990-2001)

Gender	1990-91	2000-01	Growth Rate
Boys Schools	185,100	236,000	27%
Girls Schools	92,700	137,900	49%

Source: Economic Survey of Pakistan 2000-2001, Government of Pakistan

In the context of girl's education, female teachers play a pivotal role in ensuring girl's enrollment and attendance; and various studies indicate that a female teacher also exerts a positive influence on the academic performance of all students both boys and girls. Although girls perform better when taught by a female teacher interestingly, boys also performed better when taught by a female teacher, whether in urban or rural areas as cited in the table below:

Pakistan Student's Composite Score according to Teacher's Guide

Teacher's Gender						
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Female	63	60	62	63	71	64
Male	63	56	54	50	59	55

Source: Determinants of Primary Students' Achievements; National Survey Results; MSU; Islamabad; 1995

The quality of public primary school is a matter of concern both in terms of number of teachers provided and their qualifications. The figures show that on the average 2.35 teachers have been provided to a school (9). The qualifications of teacher are generally matriculate(10 years of schooling)/ Higher Secondary(12 years of schooling) with a Primary Teaching Certificate or a Certificate of Teaching. In some areas the condition of matriculate is relaxed. On the-job-training, monitoring and guidance is nearly non-existent. A teacher with such a profile has to teach almost three to six grades simultaneously in a difficult context, an environment of least facilities and support. Lack of incentive schemes to attract qualified women into teaching restricts the capabilities of teachers and thereby they are unable to motivate the students and retain their interest in learning.

Besides shortage of teachers, there is also a high incidence of teacher absenteeism, especially in the rural areas. A random survey was carried out in peripheral area of the Islamabad Capital Territory targeting ten non-formal and formal schools. Of all the schools visited only six schools were in session and teacher attendance was satisfactorily high. While in remaining four schools either the school was called off by the teacher due to her domestic engagement or classes were being managed by the Class Monitors.



Scene of a empty classroom during school hours

PHYSICAL FACILITIES

The data on physical facilities is available and reveals as following:

POOR CONDITIONS OF LEARNING

- Thousands of Primary Schools have no buildings
- 79% schools are without electricity
- 46% schools do not have facility of drinking water
- 64% schools do not have latrine for students
- 54% schools are without a boundary wall

Source: EFA AND PAKISTAN: WHERE DO WE STAND? Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan

Supply of school infrastructure is the limiting factor to provide service to more children. The condition of school buildings in the public sector is bleak. Usually a standard building of a primary school in a rural area is two class rooms, a boundary wall and a toilet, whereas there should be six classes in a primary school. Many primary schools are one-or two-teacher schools and toilets are away from the school premise.

SCHOOLS WITHOUT FACILITIES

Area	Number of Schools without facilities				
	Without buildings	Without Electricity	Without Drinking Water	Without Toilets for students	Without Boundary Wall
Total	13,466	74,122	46,994	65,351	50,573
Rural Areas	12,426	69,583	39,910	52,717	47,730
Urban Areas	1,041	4,539	3,232	3,589	2,482

Source: AEPN-NEMIS Pakistan Education Statistics(1997-98),1999, Islamabad

Multi-grade and multi-age-teaching is common in rural schools. In comparison to private schools, public schools have a lesser number of classrooms, more students per classroom, higher student-teacher ratios, and lower percentage of female teachers. Many primary schools are running in community donated or rented buildings.



A view of a non-formal school in peripheral area of the Islamabad Capital Territory

Non-availability of boundary wall and toilets are some physical facilities due to which parents do not send girls to schools and female teachers are reluctant to work in such schools. Private schools are somewhat better provided.

READING MATERIALS

Reading materials and teaching equipment are either inadequate or of poor quality. The quality of textbooks does not make learning an interesting process and children hardly enjoy reading them. Curriculum is not relevant to the needs of students, especially girls. Children usually have no supplementary readers to strengthen their reading skills. Whereas a research study found that girls have been more responsive to supplementary reading as compared with boys(10).

Activity based learning reading culture, interest among teachers and funds to replace and add new books have been missing out since ever in our schools. There is also lack of libraries and dearth of children literature.

There is also absence of teaching of modern communication symbols, numbers, alphabets and signs without which one may not fully realize the progress of modern life.

QUALITY OF CLASSROOM TEACHING IS LACKING

Learning through involvement of senses in observation, exploration and understanding is missing. At an average 2.35 teachers are provided to a primary school. A teacher therefore finds it difficult to give individual attention to each student. Students are more into rote learning or memorization than understanding the processes. During visits to primary schools in Islamabad, Peshawar and Lahore, various questions were posed to the students to assess

their understanding of subjects like English, Mathematics, Science or History. It transpired that students were quick to respond correctly to questions where memorization was involved as tables in Mathematics or dates in History but were weak in areas where reasoning or identification of problems was required. The students of private schools had better understanding of subjects than most public schools due to difference of quality of teaching.

In Pakistan, sustained economic growth and reduction poverty all depend increasingly on progress in human development.....the education of girls is the most deficient element of Pakistan's human development strategy(11).

Government of Pakistan realizes that public sector education has failed to meet the country's needs which stems from issues of both access and quality and therefore has embarked macro level Education Sector Reforms to address the above issues.

SELECTED INCENTIVE SCHEMES AND PROJECTS FOR PROMOTION OF GIRL CHILD EDUCATION



SELECTED INCENTIVE SCHEMES AND PROJECTS FOR PROMOTION OF GIRL CHILD EDUCATION

From time to time, a number of incentive schemes, as part of various development projects have been initiated in primary education in the public sector to:

- increase access, equity and retention of students, particularly girls
- overcome inadequacy of resources
- overcome socio-cultural barriers towards girl's education

Some of the projects have been successful and have emerged as regular programs, some other have been successful but phased out with the project closure and some other could not make any impact even during the project period.

A careful study was done to select a few innovative incentive schemes applying the following criteria for presentation of successful projects in the paper that :

- project stayed in field for at least two years
- program has/had institutional set-up
- gender equality was ensured
- has reached the unreached/unserved
- had participation of the community
- enhanced enrolment rate in targeted area
- program has been sustainable, feasible or replicable
- positive impact remained visible for some time

As per methodology, as a first step, information was sought from the concerned public sector departments as Ministry of Education and Ministry of Women Development, Social Welfare and Special Education; multi-lateral development partners as UNICEF and UNESCO; the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank; NGOs and Philanthropists engaged in literacy campaign to identify incentive-based projects which complements the Government of Pakistan's education sector reforms and have been successful to make key interventions. The focal persons provided a summary of the projects and experiences perceived as "best practices" in the context of quality and equal education. After that a careful study was conducted to select a few for their presentation. In some cases, the focal persons of the project were interviewed and field visits were also taken to witness the implementation of the best practice.

The project selected as best practices are as follows:

- I. Public Sector Incentive Schemes/Project
 - *School Nutrition Programs*
 - *Monetary Support Programs*
 - *Free Distribution of Text Books*
 - *Fellowship School Programs*
 - *Community Support Process*
 - *Parent Teacher Associations*
 - *Madrassah Program*

Role of Media and Education

Legislative Measures
- II. The Private Sector & Best Practices
- III. The NGOs & Best Practices
- IV. The Philanthropists & Best Practices
- V. Multi-lateral and Bilateral Development Partners & Best Practices

A brief review of some key initiatives is as follows:

PUBLIC SECTOR INCENTIVE BASED SCHEMES/PROJECTS

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Pakistan is a low-income, food deficit country even though the country produces and imports food to meet the basic requirement, yet every day one out of three persons here, does not consume food enough to lead a healthy and productive life(1)

Malnutrition in children is a serious health problem in Pakistan. According to *Survey of Pakistan Medical Research Council*, total number of malnourished children reached 8 million in year 2000. Common health problems amongst children are low weight birth, protein energy deficiency, micro-nutrient deficiency, Vitamin-A deficiency, Iodine deficiency and Iron deficiency. According to a local study, a few common causes for children to skip school is malnutrition, anemia or worm infestation.

Malnutrition has adverse effects on physical, social and cognitive development of children. The girls in particular suffer due to son preferences in nutrition and medical care in the society.

Government of Pakistan therefore came forward to improve the nutritional status of children through a *School Nutrition Program* called *Tawana Pakistan*.

TAWANA PAKISTAN PROGRAM

An indigenous direct intervention, designed by the Ministry of Women Development, Social Welfare and Special Education, is being implemented in 29 high poverty districts of Punjab, NWFP, Sindh, Balochistan, Northern Areas and AJK to access over half a million girls in 5300 Girls Primary Schools over a period of 54 months during 2002-2006 to:

- Improve nutritional status/health of girls through amelioration of malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies with a view to arrest stunting and wasting of Girl Child both enrolled and out of school by administering balanced meals, micro-nutrients and medicines in school
- Increase in school enrolment, improve retention and school outcomes through accessing girls in the community who are currently not enrolled.

The secondary objectives of the project are:

- Creation of awareness of better living concepts in the community on public health/hygiene, education and status of women/girls
- Introduction through the participating process of local capacity building for creation of a nexus between human development, elected Councilors and community empowerment
- Devolution of responsibility to the beneficiary for ownership and sustainability of the program(2).

The project ensures a two year complete feeding cycle where a freshly cooked meal would be served 6 days a week for 10 months a year. Twice a week, children shall be provided with micronutrient supplementation that include Iron, Vitamin A, Iodine etc and every six months they would be provided with de-worming medicines. It also aims to enhance awareness of school girls and their parents on health, hygiene and nutrition.

The target population under this project is between 5-12 years old, both enrolled and out-of-school girls. Enrolment of out-of school girls in the feeding program is to provide an incentive to enroll in the school and attract drop-outs.

It is expected to be sustained through Government funds and ancillary support from other programs and community based participation.

Under the Poverty Reduction Strategy of the Government of Pakistan, this project has been designed to invoke synergy of socio-economic and grass-root community development at school and democratic level at each stage of implementation targeted at poverty reduction and to bring on board the NGOs for community mobilization for participation and sustainable development.

A National Steering Committee has been established for policy guidance; Provincial Co-ordination Committees, District School Nutrition Committees, School Nutrition Committees for feeding program at school levels, National Implementation Unit to manage and oversee project implementation through co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of the project in collaboration of the two implementing agencies Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (3) and Aga Khan University. The Government has also brought on board seven different NGOs to assist in implementation of the project.

MONETARY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Scholarship programs are initiated from time to time to provide monetary support to poor girls and boys to complete early schooling and to continue secondary schooling.

Complicated banking procedures and delays prevented parents and girls from depending on scholarships as a regular source of income for education. The effectiveness of such programs is not known.

FREE DISTRIBUTION OF TEXTBOOKS

Free distribution of textbooks was offered to increase enrollment and reduce drop-outs through sharing the costs of parents of school going children. Though free supply of textbooks reduced the costs, especially of girl's education, in households with a large number of girls and improved student learning through better access to books, this scheme had no sustainable impact on girl's retention and enrolment.

Generally, the above incentive schemes were successful in improving the enrolment and retention of girls in the targeted schools. However, according to the results of a qualitative survey, based on perceptions of parents, teachers and students, these schemes were creating a "dependency syndrome" i.e., creating some groups of beneficiaries who were not interested in girl's education beyond the life of the incentive schemes (4). Also, the incentive schemes were expensive programs to administer and implementation of the schemes suffered from a number of managerial and logistic problems. Active community participation was also missing.

FELLOWSHIP SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Fellowship School Program was conceived and initiated by the Directorate of Primary Education, Government of Balochistan as part of its efforts to concentrate on increasing the access and equality of female education across the province. The program started in 1994 and continued upto 1998. The scheme was successful to foster stronger partnership between the client- parent/student, service provider- the school and the policy maker-the government.

Two fellowship programs targeted two areas, rural and urban. *Rural Fellowship Program* meant to serve villages that could not be covered under any other scheme. Following conditions were to be met to start a school:

- at least 40 not school going girls aged 5-10 of the village
- parents to pay the annual fee
- Village Education Committee to manage and operate the school.

Under the *Urban Fellowship Program*, low-income and under-privileged areas of towns across the province were the targeted. It required:

- at least 50 girls aged 4-8 to start a school
- parents to pay the fee
- Parents Education Committee to run the day to day management of the school
- community to provide or rent school building in the middle of the village/ target area. The government to provide the subsidy only

The Government was to recognize the school if:

- there is participation of various bodies in the establishment, administration and monitoring of schools
- the school serve the village/slum area which are not covered by the Directorate of Primary Education's regular policy for establishment of the primary school under the Community Support Program
- people are given an option and opportunity to develop, operate and manage their own schools on partnership basis with the parents through Parents Education Committees
- the school is able to motivate the parents to pay fee for the girl child's education
- the school can help establish a model to demonstrate how government can play its role as facilitator and supporter rather than implementer and controller of education process

The schools were provided subsidy. The subsidy is the monetary assistance offered to the schools for acquiring school material and paying teachers salaries etc. for a period of four years. At the end of three years, the school was expected to be able to operate on a self-sustaining basis.

Under the Fellowship Program, 26 rural and 33 urban schools are operational. Following are the benefits of the fellowship schools:

- It provided employment to 169 female and 27 male teachers
- It enhanced enrolment to 4,861 girls and 527 for boys
- It established excellent government-community partnership. Communities were becoming a part of the educational system
- The program was replicable. The experience was replicated in Sindh in 1997 where one hundred fellowship schools were opened 40 in urban and 60 in rural areas with the assistance of DFID(5).

Some of the problems that were identified were:

- Community had limited capacity for school management
- fee collection was unsatisfactory
- subsidy was insufficient
- there has been difficulty in getting buildings for schools in urban areas.

Despite difficulties, the added value of the fellowship program is that the community became a part of the education system and this better educated community was to gradually own the school and monitor its performance.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROCESS

Community Support Process is a means by which the governments and communities assisted by an NGO develop a partnership through which girl's schools are established to operate in rural and far flung areas. It focuses on localities with no schools.

The following steps are involved:

- Initially, the community is motivated by the NGOs.
- school-community participation is activated for achieving gender equity in access to education for both boys and girls

Community Support Process has been one of the most successful initiatives in girl's education in South Asia. The success of the program has become possible with the support of various donors. CSP has facilitated opening of about 1500 girl's primary schools with more than 70,000 girls enrolled and with local female teachers in Balochistan during the period 1992-1999. In Sindh, 95 Community support schools were established with an enrolment of 3125 children by 2002` (6).

Various CSP schools have been opened with Aus Aid and Netherlands Support in Balochistan, Education Department, Balochistan and the UNICEF(7).

NGOs also formed an important part of the program as the ground level work to motivate the community for opening up of a school was carried out by the NGOs.

The project had following benefits:

- It has brought confidence in decision making at the government, community and NGO level
- provided gender sensitive environment in schools much needed in conservative areas mobilized community for education of girls and resistance to girl's education
- Ownership of school belonged to the community.

It has the potential of replication in other regions but requires strong motivation and financial investments.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS

Based on Parent-School-Community participation concept, Parent Teacher Associations were launched to:

- Provide conducive learning environment
- Increased enrolment and retention
- Improved quality of learning

In collaboration with Multi-Donor Support Unit of the World Bank, it was established as a non-political forum where parents, teachers and community representatives meet to:

- make meaningful contribution to provision of quality education
- enhance understanding of the parents
- consider ways and means to decrease drop-out ratio and teachers absenteeism.

NWFP was the first province to initiate PTAs in 1993, initially known as Village Education Committees. About 17,000 PTAs have been formed to date. A PTA comprises School's head teacher, five elected representatives of parents/community, one retired government servant and one village elder (8).

Sindh followed the suit by establishing PTAs in government schools in 1994 and has today 27,000 PTAs. Partners of the initiative in Sindh include UNICEF, DFID, Sindh Primary Education Development Project, Teacher Resource Centre, communities, teachers and schools heads (9).

In 1995, Balochistan decided to set-up Parent Teachers School Management Committees-PTSMCs in all the government schools. Directorate of Primary Education, NGOs, UNICEF and Royal Netherlands Embassy remained active partners in its implementation. During 1995-98, 10,000 PTSMC were constituted. It was implemented in haste so the desired results could not be achieved (10).

As a result of PTAs participation of parents in schools yielded positive results. The project was easily replicable

MADRASSA SCHOOLS

Madrassahs are religious schools whose traditions date back almost a thousand years. Founded on charities, today there are as many as 10,000 such schools all over the country (11). The schools provide free boarding and lodging to thousands of poor, orphan and underprivileged children. In June, 2001, the government announced a policy to register and regulate the hundreds of Madrassahs and to bring the madrassahs education at par with the regular public education system, government introduced English, Urdu, Mathematics and Science besides compulsory education in the Madrassahs.

PROMOTION OF EDUCATION THROUGH MEDIA

Media in Pakistan is coming up as a strong supporter of women and children rights and has been successful in creating awareness on their status and role in society. Both the print and electronic media devote regular time to women and child right issues pertaining to primary education, child labour, nutrition of children, their increased work load and domestic violence against women. This has created increased awareness amongst the public about the constraints faced by women and girls in society. Many talk shows on radio and television have highlighted women's/ girls' deprivations and the discriminations against them, resulting in gender sensitization touching a range of topics from health, education, poverty, violence, family planning, professions, even AIDS. These programs form an active part of the State electronic and print media. Various issue specific commercials as on education, girl child and gender discrimination are shown on State media at prime time to sensitize people and create awareness.

The media sensitizes the viewers and readers to:

- discard harmful cultural practices
- younger generation not to follow contemporary cultural taboos blindly
- powerlessness of women in family decision-making.

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- help women's empowerment, women are shown as equal partners like men and their views are valued in family decision-making processes

The media plays an active role in reporting the acts of violence or discrimination against women or children thus sensitizing viewers and readers motivating them to be vocal and assert pressure. Issues raised by media on women and children, are debated on the floors of the Parliament thus bringing the issues at appropriate forum for their early redressal.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

COMPULSORY PRIMARY EDUCATION

Primary Education has been made compulsory in N.W.F.P., Sindh and Islamabad Capital Territory through acts passed by the relevant cabinets (12). This aims to bring children to school and parents accountable for not sending their children to schools. This is being done in phased manner from the tehsil level.

POLITICAL COMMITMENTS

It envisages that President, Prime Minister and the Political chiefs at the provincial level during their official tours will invariably visit educational institutions especially primary schools so as to impress upon every one that education is the key concern of the government.

CONTRIBUTION OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR

At present, the private sector caters to 30% of all primary school children in the country and employs 20% of all primary school teachers. According to a recent census of private education institutions, there are 34,000 institutions, mostly urban and co-educational, providing general education i.e., primary, middle and secondary level schooling, to almost 6 million children of all ages(13).

On an average, 43% of all private students are girls, with almost 40% in rural and 45% in urban areas. Of all private school primary teachers, 77% are females, with 64% in rural and 86% in urban areas. The share of private school expenditures is estimated at 0.6 per cent of GNP(14).

Private schools usually display better standards of infrastructure and teaching quality. According to PIHS (1998/99), there are marked fee differentials between public and private schools. For primary classes in urban areas, tuition fee is almost 12 times higher in private schools, relative to that in public schools; it is 20 times 20 in rural areas. Most private schools are located in urban areas and as such an overwhelming majority of people in higher income (or higher income quintile) groups prefer to send their children to private schools. The proportion of children attending private schools in rural areas is lower than that in urban areas, mainly due to lack of private schools in those areas. Interestingly, a higher proportion of rural girls (than boys) attend private schools, perhaps due to better facilities of private schools such as a higher percentage of female teachers; availability of water and electricity, and perhaps better provision of security.

Several private organizations are also involved in the promotion of Technical and Vocational Education, offering training courses in electrical repairs, auto mechanics and computers. However, the scope of technical education for women remains limited.

CONTRIBUTION OF NON GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS)

The Seventh Five Year Plan duly recognized the role of NGOs to spearhead the cause of literacy efforts in Pakistan. Due to its resources, capacity and out-reach, NGOs were brought on board by the government to play an active role.

At present, 395 NGOs are working for the promotion of women and girls' education in Pakistan (16). NGOs like Malik Maula Bukhsh Memorial Trust (MMBMT), Bunyad, (in Punjab) Bannhn Beli (Sindh) Society for Community Support for Primary Education in Balochistan (SCSPEB), and Khwendo Kor (NWFP) have established a number of non-formal and formal primary schools for girls in remote, traditional and hard areas with local women teachers, teaching in multi-grade and multi-age conditions. In many cases the schools have been housed in the residences of women teachers(16).

An example of public NGO partnership is the Tameer-i-Millat Pakistan schools all over Pakistan where Educate Pakistan joined hands with the Ministry of Education and developed a system to establish and open primary schools in remotest areas of the country. Schools have been established through communities support process, honoring the local culture of gender-segregated society by appointing women teachers acceptable to parents and communities, for the education of girls and boys.

The public sector does not have the capacity to achieve the targets laid down in national policies, therefore the energies and potential of the NGO sector need to be combined with public resources. Partnerships between public, private and NGO sectors has been formed to achieve the goals of EFA, sharing the responsibility of education as genuine participants in national building activity. NGO contacts with the communities and their outreach capacity, flexible approach and commitment has helped to make gradually scale down the resistance of the parents to send their daughters to schools and has reopened many closed girls' public schools operative in remote and difficult areas.

Many programs of NGOs are being supported by the public sector through extending technical as well as financial assistance. In some cases teachers/staff of NGO schools are being trained in other public school buildings and the management of public schools is being shifted to NGOs to enhance school efficiency.

EDUCATE PAKISTAN

Tameer-e-Millat Foundation a NGO, launched its activities by establishing a “School” at Khewra, District Jehlum in 1987 with enrollment of 60 students which now stands at 18780(8849 boys and 9931 girls), it has established 321 Non-formal community Schools and 27 formal schools mostly in remote areas of Pakistan (17). The objectives are:

- developing an integrated system of education
- Quality education with emphasis on character building
- Access to education(through formal and non-formal schools
- Sustainability through community participation
- Educational planning and management

Educate Pakistan is a project of Tameer-e-Millat Foundation initiated to promote and enhance the TMF's support base and provide tools for its support of the public sector's *Education for All* initiatives in Pakistan spearheading from the existing 44% to the 100% literacy rate through creating public-private partnership with the focus on indigenous resource base and encouraging volunteerism.

The achievements of TMF include:

- 321 Non-Formal Schools
- 26 Formal Schools
- School of Excellence (Residential school)

- Institute of Teacher's Education
- Educate Pakistan Forum
- Educate Pakistan Resource Centre

A visit to one of the non-formal school of Educate Pakistan in the outskirts of Islamabad revealed that through establishment of Home Schools with a teacher and 20-25 students of different classes and age groups and a single teacher are busy in imparting basic education to primary level children.

ROLE OF INTERANTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENICES AND INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Besides the above efforts, following multi-lateral and bilateral development agencies are active in promoting education(18) in various areas:

Multi-lateral Development Partners:

- *Asian Development Bank* assisted projects are aimed at qualitative and quantitative improvement in science, mathematics and computer education at the national level for the period 2002 to 2009.
- *World Bank* seeks to spearhead education and universalize primary education in the province of Punjab, Sind and NWFP during the period 2004 to 2007.
- *United Nations Population Fund* has joined hands with the Ministry of Education for a project on Population and Development Education for Youth through intervention in curriculum and text books, circulation of teachers and educational administration. It has selected two districts from each of the four provinces and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Duration of the project is four years from 2002 to 2008.
- *World Food Program* targeted towards education of the girl child, provides incentive program for the children of the underdeveloped areas through Food for Education Program. Beneficiaries of this project are the provinces of Punjab, NWFP, Sind, Balochistan and AJK. Started in 2002, the program shall continue till 2004.
- *UNESCO* has also generated community participation for promoting girl child education at the national level. The project cycle is from 2004 to 2008.
- *UNICEF*: UNICEF had primary education programs for 22 districts of the country in all provinces. The project cycle commences from 2004 and ends in 2008.
- *Bi-lateral Development Partners:*
- *DfID* has a national program for education for the period 2001 to 2004. Its Link Program of connecting British schools to schools based here in Pakistan is innovative and offers a interesting study.
- *European Commission* is engaged in education sector programs in Sindh and Northern Areas. The duration of engagement for this project is 2001-2008.

- *GTZ*: German Agency for Development is exclusively engaged in capacity building of the teachers through training in Punjab and NWFP. It started this program in 2002 which shall continue till 2007.
- *Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation* in collaboration with UNICEF aimed at Universal Quality Primary Education in six selective districts of the Punjab province, NWFP and FATA. The duration of projects is four years from 2002 to 2008.
- *USAID's* focus is on Pakistan Primary Education and Literacy Program to assist in education policy planning and training, curriculum development and fostering girl child education. Under the Strategic Objective for Grant Agreement signed between the Government of Pakistan and the Government of the United States of America, a US \$ 100 million package has been announced. The focus of this investment will be Sind, Balochistan, Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Karachi and Ministry of Education. This was launched in 2002 and shall continue till 2006.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

FINDINGS

Estimates of educational indicators reveal two fundamental concerns. Firstly, more than 50% of the population is illiterate, nearly two thirds of which are females. Secondly, illiterate population expands each year not only due to the significant number of children, particularly girls failing to enroll in the regular education system but dropping out at an early stage. Under these circumstances *Education For All* is a formidable challenge for the Government of Pakistan.

There are seven fundamental aspects of the education situation in Pakistan which form the root cause of the problem of low level and quality of female literacy:

Socio-Cultural resistance to Girl's Education:

Still 5.9 million girls of age 5 to 9 are out of school which can be linked to low status of women in society. The societal setup in Pakistan ascribes to woman traditional role that of a housewife and motherhood and thereby aspirations, achievements and performance of girls are usually responsive to those stereotyped expectations. Most families do not encourage participation of women in income generating activities in the formal sector as it presumed that they may neglect their husbands, children and other domestic responsibilities. The strong resistance to girl's education is gradually waning. Today, personal security of girls dominate parent's decisions of sending them to school. Long distances to schools hinder girl's access to schools. Resistance to girl's education is primarily due to unsafe traveling, inadequate school physical infrastructure and lack of female teachers.

High Drop-out rate is putting additional pressure on Education structure

Drop out rate among girls is high and is increasing at a higher pace relative to boys. About 56 percent of girls and 44 per cent of boys leave school before reaching the fifth Grade. Female children receive an average of 1.3 years of schooling as compared to male children who attend an average of 3.8 years of school. The biggest drop-out is from Class II to Class III. The common explanation is that elementary reading and writing is sufficient when girl is reaching the age of *Purdah* or segregation.

The root of female education problem lies at the primary level. The low participation at the primary level, due to problems both on demand and supply side, keep the female down from higher education, whenever opportunities are available the female show better results than males.

Since a large proportion of girls drop-out at the primary level, only 19 percent females attain education upto Matric, 8 per cent upto Intermediate, 5 per cent upto Bachelors and only 1.5 per cent upto M.A./M.Sc. Indicators of higher education are reflective of narrow base of female primary education. Unless it is broadened higher education for women will remain beyond the reach of female population except to a small proportion of urban women. Indicators demand higher investment in total female population in the education sector both in urban area, comprising 30 percent of the female population and rural areas comprising 70 per cent of the female population. Any effort to improve the share of female higher education requires serious efforts to curtail the drop-out at the primary level as the foundation of the education pyramid has to be strong.

The female education would be seriously constrained by the paucity of teachers. It would be necessary to employ more female teachers in primary schools.

Lack of Quality Education and Relevance of Basic Education

Education system in Pakistan has been somewhat resistant to change. The quality and relevance of basic education needs to be improved dramatically. Irrelevant curricula, lack of innovative teaching skills, rote memorization, inadequate supplementary reading and high student vis a vis teacher ratio debar quality education in most public schools.

The system is producing three streams of students, English medium students, Urdu medium students and Madrassah students. In most public sector schools, the medium of instruction is Urdu. English medium schools offer better quality of teaching but are too expensive for common man. Madrassah schools offer religious education. Both Urdu medium public sector schools in rural areas and lower income urban areas and Madrassah schools lack physical and teaching facilities. English medium schools are better equipped. Since the medium of instruction for tertiary education in Pakistani universities is English and it is also the official language of the country, students of English medium schools have better access to higher education and better job opportunities than to students from other two educational institutions. Co-existence of parallel streams of these institutions also inhibit social cohesion

Field observations show that the education sector reforms are interpreted to increase the quantity rather than enhance quality of education. The need of the hour is to have a system of instruction that builds problem-solving skills, increases employability and is customer focused and takes all on board.

Incentive based schemes are establishing dependency syndrome

The incentive based schemes to promote literacy and education and curtail drop-out rate are creating a "dependency syndrome", i.e. creating some groups of beneficiaries who are not interested in girl's education beyond the life of the incentive schemes. Sustaining incentive schemes is also difficult. These are expensive programs to administer without multi-lateral or bilateral assistance. Implementation of these schemes sometimes suffer from a number of managerial and logistic problems.

Lack of monitoring and evaluation

A regular mechanism of monitoring and evaluation is missing in the education system of Pakistan. Due to this gap, causes of failure or effectiveness of various education projects and schemes can not be assessed before the launch of the new schemes.

Inadequate political will and commitment

Generally speaking, expenditure on primary education trickles down to female schools but expenditures on higher education, particularly universities mainly benefits the males. The past neglect of the primary education is reflected in the small allocations made for it within the education sector in the development plans. The paradigm shift in the Seventh Five Year Plan towards higher investments in primary and particularly girl's education indicate better statistics for girls education.

Education Sector Reforms (2001-2005) strategy entails national legislative, administrative and financial actions at all levels. Regionally, Sindh, Punjab and Islamabad Capital Territory have legislated compulsory primary education, for both girls and boys, on a trial basis. Under the Government of Pakistan's Devolution Plan, compulsory education needs to be mandated by the Local bodies which are not yet put in place.

Budgetary allocations for the education sector remain inadequate in order to meet the educational needs. To achieve the goals of Education for All, atleast 4% of the GNP needs to be allocated for the educational purposes notably for free and compulsory education for all children.

A total commitment, backed by political will is required towards higher investments in female education in Pakistan.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Issues faced by education sector are the quantitative challenge which requires enrolling at least 18 million children in primary schools each year, alongwith 2.2 children who enter the school age group every year due to population growth. This challenge needs to take on board the huge percentage of drop-out each year. Incentive based programs are still needed to dismantle the barrier towards girl's education and to bring 5.9 million girls to primary schools each year and to retain them from dropping out. It is as significant to take care of the girls dropping out of the school at early stages as much as enrolling them to school. Girl's education brings high value social returns therefore it requires higher investments.
- The root of female education problem lies at the primary level, therefore narrow base of female education needs to be broadened or else higher education will remain beyond the reach of female population except to a small proportion of urban women. Higher investment in female population, particularly in rural areas, which comprise 70 per cent of female population is required. Improving access to girl's education require a high level of political commitment

- The quality and relevance of basic education need to be improved dramatically as learning achievements are startlingly low.
- External financial resources within the framework of commitment made by donor agencies at the Dakar Conference need to be mobilized
- In order to maintain continuity in ongoing *Education Sector Reforms*, the Multi-lateral and Bi-lateral development partners to support home grown education reform programs. A *Donors Thematic Group on Education* needs to be established. Government of Pakistan to determine the thematic areas for intervention and prioritize the areas for intervention to the development partners. This forum will also avoid duplication of efforts.
- Instead of random selection of regions, districts with high drop-out rates, high gender parity index, low enrolment & low literacy rates should be targeted on priority, after needs assessment, to ensure focused implementation
- Monitoring towards goals is essential

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SABINA QURESHI

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